TWO HAPPY YEARS IN CEYLON

CEYLON.

"And we came to the Isle of Flowers;
  Their breath met us out on the seas,
For the Spring and the Middle Summer
  Sat each on the lap of the breeze:

And the red passion-flower to the cliffs,
  And the dark-blue clematis, clung;
And, starred with myriad blossoms,
  The long convolvulus hung."

THE

THUPARAMA DAGOBA, B.C. 300, ANURADHAPURA.

TWO HAPPY YEARS IN CEYLON

BY

C. F. GORDON CUMMING

AUTHOR OF
'AT HOME IN FIJI,' 'A LADY'S CRUISE IN A FRENCH MAN-OF-WAR,'
'FIRE FOUNTAINS OF THE SANDWICH ISLES,'
'GRANITE CRAGS OF CALIFORNIA,' 'IN THE HIMALAYAS AND ON INDIAN PLAINS,'
'IN THE HEBRIDES,' 'VIA CORNWALL TO EGYPT,'
'WANDERINGS IN CHINA'

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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PREFACE.

WHAT can be the reason that writers on Ceylon seem impelled to describe their book as a term of years?

'Fifty Years in Ceylon.' An Autobiography by Major Thomas Skinner.

'Eleven Years in Ceylon.' By Major Forbes, 78th Highlanders.

'Eight Years in Ceylon.' By Sir Samuel Baker.

'Seven Years in Ceylon.' By Mary and Margaret Leitch,—

and finally, 'Two Happy Years in Ceylon,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming, who had so named her notes of pleasant days in the fair Isle, before realising that any of her predecessors had thus described their longer terms of residence therein?

I can only ascribe it to the fact, so evident in each

of these works, that the several writers have retained such sweet memories of

> "Moonlit seas,
> Of dreamy sunsets, and of balmy air,
> Of glowing landscapes and of shadowy bowers
> Where stately palms low murmur in the breeze,"—

that they have loved to enumerate the months and years that glided by amid such pleasant influences.

Although, by comparison with that of others, my own term in the Earthly Paradise was short, I can safely say that, as it was all play and no work, I had abundant leisure to note many matters of interest seen under exceptionally favourable circumstances.

I trust, therefore, that these pages may prove of some value to the ever-increasing army of wanderers in search of winter-quarters.

THE CASTLE JERMYN—*see p.* 107.

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TWO HAPPY YEARS IN CEYLON.

INTRODUCTORY.

THERE are perhaps few families in the Mother Country to whom the farther corners of Greater Britain have (from the colonising or sporting instincts of its various members) become more really familiar to the imagination of the younger branches than that to which I was welcomed, as its twelfth addition.

Thus about the time of my first introduction to the immortal Robinson Crusoe, my eldest brother Penrose returned from Canada, soon to be followed by my second brother Roualeyn, who had made his mark as the pioneer of all the Lion-hunters who since then have ravaged the hunting-grounds of Southern Africa.

Then two more of the home brood started to carve their fortunes in far countries. Almost simultaneously my fourth and fifth brothers, John and William, sailed for Ceylon and Bombay, where the latter tamed wild men [1] and slew wild

[1] Wild Men and Wild Beasts. By Colonel Gordon Cumming. Published by David Douglas, Edinburgh.

beasts, while the former settled down to sober cocoa-nut planting in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa; and then, through weary years of waiting for the growth of trees which never in his lifetime repaid his outlay, he obtained work in the forests on the east coast, and likewise distinguished himself as a cunning and mighty hunter, beloved by the wild tribes.

During a term of twenty years, scarcely a month passed without bringing us letters from these two faithful brothers; so that life in the forests of Ceylon and of Bombay became as familiar to our thoughts as grouse-shooting or salmon-fishing in Morayshire. Some of the details in these sporting diaries might well excite the envy of many a less successful Nimrod. Thus one mail brought me a letter from India, telling of thirty tigers as the chief item of a two months' bag; while my Ceylon letter of the same date told of the rejoicing of the villagers over the slaughter, by their white friend, of twenty-five leopards!—a highly satisfactory riddance of dangerous foes.

A journey to India or Ceylon in those days was a very different thing from the simple pleasure-trip which, thanks to swift steamers and large competition, it has now become. Though a great advance had been made since the first quarter of the present century, when the colonists in Colombo were only gladdened twice a-year by the arrival of a sailing-vessel from England, bringing supplies of European clothing and stores, nevertheless, so late as 1840, three months occasionally elapsed without a call from any European sailing-ship, in what was then the open roadstead of Colombo; so we may well understand that the approach of the smallest steamer would suffice to throw the population into a fever of excitement.

In those days the mails from London came *viâ* Bombay, whence runners carried them across India and Ceylon, and great was the satisfaction when letters were delivered in Colombo only forty days after their despatch from Britain! After a while Ceylon started a steamer to carry the mails to and from Bombay, thus reducing the transit to London to thirty days. A few years later, steamers bound for Calcutta or Australia brought mails and passengers direct in twenty days—a period which has been gradually lessened, till now some swift steamers deliver their mail-bags in Colombo in fifteen days, and as it occasionally happens that a return steamer is ready to start immediately, it is now possible to receive answers to letters within five weeks.[1]

Nor is the reduction on time alone. The cost of travel has also been minimised, and the colonists of the present day need no longer face the prospect of such prolonged exile as was deemed a matter of course forty years ago, when the expense of a "run home" was prohibitive.

Thus, in the case of these two brothers, though often longing for a sight of home and home faces, fifteen years elapsed ere they were able to make arrangements for a

[1] Still more rapid and wonderful has been the development of our Australian cities with their crowded harbours. But for a strange illustration of the influence of steam-power at our very doors, we may note Sir Walter Scott's testimony, that in his day (he was my father's friend) one small mail-cart carried the posts between London and Edinburgh, and he mentions having seen it arrive with only one letter, addressed to the manager of the British Linen Banking Company.

Moreover, is it not strange to mark the development as it affects two of what we deem our daily necessaries, potatoes and tea, and remember that the former had never even been heard of till Sir Walter Raleigh imported the first, and that in 1660 Mr Pepys described tea as "the new Chinese drink"! And now Britain's annual consumption of tea is about 180,000,000 lb., of which about half comes from China and Java, and the other half from India and Ceylon.

meeting in the old country. The younger happily arrived in safety; but alas! the vessel which should have brought the elder from Ceylon, brought tidings of a HOME-going far different from that which he had planned. He had died very suddenly, almost on the eve of the date when he had purposed embarking, and was laid to rest beside the blue sea-lake at Batticaloa.

Barely two years later I made my first voyage to the East, touching Ceylon at Point de Galle *en route* to Calcutta. That one glimpse of the lovely isle impressed itself on my memory as such a dream of delight, that when, a few years later, one of my earliest friends was consecrated Bishop of Colombo,[1] I very gladly accepted his invitation to return to Ceylon on a leisurely visit, finding headquarters under his hospitable roof, and thence exploring such parts of the isle as had special interest for me.

These interests gradually widened, owing to the unbounded kindness of numerous friends, and friends' friends; and so it came to pass that so many delightful expeditions were organised, and so many pleasant homes claimed visits, that wellnigh two years slipped away ere I finally bade adieu to the green Isle of Palms, to which, I think, notwithstanding the claims of many a lovely South Sea isle, we must concede the right it claims,—to have been, and still to continue, the true Earthly Paradise.

On my return to Scotland, after widely extended travels, a selection of upwards of three hundred of my water-colour paintings in various parts of "Greater Britain" were exhibited in their respective courts in the Indian and Colonial Exhibition at South Kensington, and at subsequent Colonial

[1] The Right Rev. Hugh W. Jermyn, now Bishop of Brechin and Primus of Scotland.

Exhibitions in Liverpool and Glasgow. Of these, about sixty of scenery in Ceylon were selected from several hundreds, which, on the principle of "never a day without at least one careful-coloured sketch," had accumulated as I wandered in every direction—north, south, east, and west—basking on the yellow sands of most fascinating palm-fringed sea-coast, or gliding over calm rivers—gipsying among ruins of mighty pre-Christian cities in the depths of lonely forests, or awaiting the sunrise on lofty mountain-summits,—studies of exquisite foliage or of strange Buddhist and Tamil shrines, and all enlivened to memory by the recollection of picturesque groups of brown men, women, and children of divers race and very varied hue, some scantily draped, others gorgeously apparelled, but all alike harmonious in colour.

Friendly critics, who say that these sketches have helped them to realise something of the true character and beauty of Ceylonese scenery, have asked me to supplement the brush with the pen, and tell the readers who have so kindly received my notes of travel in other lands something of my own impressions of Ceylon. So now I sit surrounded with diaries and letters, travel-notes and sketch-books innumerable, and portfolios in which each page recalls some day of deep interest and many of delight; while the signatures in the corner of each sketch vividly recall the many friends whose kindness did so much to gladden all days, and to smooth all difficulties from the path of a happy guest.

My chief difficulty lies in selecting from such a mass of material only so much as can be compressed within reasonable limits. Another difficulty lies in a far too personal knowledge of certain changes which, to those intimately acquainted with Ceylon, mark a complete revolution in its social economy, and which gave birth to a very sad parody

of certain well-known lines descriptive of an isle of which for some years it was too true that—

> "every prospect pleases,
> But no man makes a pile!"

To the general reader, however, and to the traveller likely to follow in my footsteps, the only visible feature of a change which to the initiated tells of the total ruin of very many industrious and energetic European planters, and the commencement of an altogether new era, bringing wealth to a new generation, lies in the fact that the vast mountain districts, which ten years ago presented one unbroken expanse of coffee-fields, are now chiefly covered with tea-plantations, varied with cinchona, cacao, Indian-rubber trees, and other products, more or less experimental, while only in certain districts is coffee successfully proving its claim to renewed public confidence. There is apparently, however, no doubt that Ceylon will henceforth be emphatically distinguished in the manner so happily described by the present Governor, Sir Arthur Havelock, as "the land for excellent tea." That its character in this respect is already well established is evident from the fact, that whereas in 1873 only 23 lb. of tea were exported from Ceylon, the export in 1890 was about 40,000,000 lb.; and there seems every reason to believe that in the current year 1891 it will be fully 63,000,000; and assuredly, long ere the end of the century, it will have risen to 100,000,000![1]

[1] I cannot resist quoting the following paragraph from the 'Pall Mall Budget' for March 13, 1891:—

"An enormous Price for Ceylon Tea.

"Unusual excitement prevailed on Tuesday in Mincing Lane, on the offering by Messrs Gow, Wilson, and Stanton, tea-brokers, in public auction, of a small lot of Ceylon tea from the Gartmore estate in

Nor is there any fear of a glut in the market since America and Russia have proved appreciative customers. The chief danger lies in the probability that Brazil and Madras will each be stimulated to enter into the competition. Patriotic planters are adjured to refrain from selling tea-seed to Brazil; but as regards Madras, it not only possesses a vast area of suitable land, but, moreover, commands all the labour, Ceylon being entirely dependent on that Presidency for her coolies. So that rivalry is to be feared from that quarter.

Simultaneously with the amazingly rapid development of this new product, 1891 has to record the most successful Pearl-fishery of the present century, the Government share of the total amount realised being upwards of £96,370, of which about £10,000 covers all expenses, so that the revenue profits to an extent far exceeding the most golden

Maskeliya (Mr T. C. Anderson). This tea possesses extraordinary quality in liquor, and is composed almost entirely of small 'golden tips,' which are the extreme ends of the small succulent shoots of the plant, and the preparation of such tea is, of course, most costly. Competition was of a very keen description. The bidding, which was pretty general to start with, commenced with an offer of £1, 1s. per lb.; as the price advanced to £8 many buyers dropped out, and at this price about five wholesale dealers were willing to purchase. Offers were then made up to about £9, 9s. by three of the leading houses, the tea being ultimately knocked down to the 'Mazawattee Ceylon Tea Company' at the most extraordinary and unprecedented price of £10, 12s. 6d. per lb."

Naturally, when this news reached Ceylon the excitement knew no bounds. This, however, was intensified in the following month, when another sale of "golden tips," prepared on the Haviland estate (Mr W. A. M. Denison), sold in Mincing Lane for £17 per lb. Even this surprising price was, however, very soon surpassed, for the next consignment of "golden tips" from Gartmore fetched £25, 10s. per lb. This was quickly followed by the sale of a small box from the Kellie estate at £30 per lb. While, on August 25, another parcel was actually sold at £35 per lb.!!

expectations. In 1888 these fisheries realised £80,424, less £8000 of expenses. Such sums had only been realised four times in the present century: therefore, that two such fisheries should follow in such rapid succession, is an unspeakable blessing to Ceylon. From 1882 to 1886 the return from these fisheries had been almost *nil;* but in the years 1887, 1889, and 1890, a total was realised of £120,720, less £1489 of expenses. Naturally the colonists look for immediate railway extension in divers directions, and for other boons which, ten years ago, seemed altogether visionary.

A notable advance in the last decade has been that of the steadily increasing prosperity of a multitude of native cultivators, owing to the restoration of several of the cyclopean tanks and other irrigation works, created by the autocratic rulers of olden days, but which (partly since British rule rejected the ancient custom of "Rajah-kariya" —*i.e.*, compulsory work for the king—by which the rulers of the Isle exacted from every man so many days' work annually for the general weal) had fallen into total decay, so that a scanty and unhealthy population could barely find subsistence in the arid jungle or malarious swamps which replaced the verdant rice-fields of olden days.

In the face of many difficulties and strenuous opposition on account of the great outlay involved, Sir William Gregory and the Honourable Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon have accomplished a work earnestly advocated by previous Governors, Sir Henry Ward and Sir Hercules Robinson—namely, the restoration of a considerable portion of the ancient system of irrigation; and already the wisdom of the measure is abundantly proved by the transformation of great areas of country, where luxuriant crops now once more support a healthy and well-fed population.

Another great boon to the hitherto poverty-stricken and suffering villagers has been the establishment in many districts of village hospitals, where the sick are now wisely and judiciously cared for, to the immense improvement of the general health.

Yet another marked change in the last few years has been the construction of the mighty breakwater, upwards of 4000 feet in length, of huge blocks of concrete, on a foundation of masses of gneiss, thanks to which Colombo now owns a harbour so excellent and secure as to have drawn thither almost all the traffic of the Isle, while beautiful but treacherous Point de Galle is now wellnigh forsaken—a change that was not effected until many a noble vessel had proved to her cost the lurking dangers of numerous patches of coral within the harbour, rising from the ocean-bed almost to the surface.

But for this, the situation of Galle marks it as the natural port of call for vessels, inasmuch as turning in to Colombo involves a considerable deviation from their course; so it may be that as the commerce of the Isle increases, it may yet prove worth while to clear the seemingly noble harbour of Point de Galle of its submarine dangers, and so woo back the vanished shipping.

Meanwhile, however, the fact remains that Galle harbour is now comparatively forsaken. Few vessels enter her port save those engaged in the coal or coir trade.[1]

The offices of the great shipping companies, and of the principal mercantile houses, have been transferred to Colombo (which has long been the Government headquarters), and pleasant luxurious homes in which, but a few

[1] Coir is the coarse fibre obtained from the outer husk of the cocoa-nut, which so abounds on the southern coast.

years ago, kindly hospitality reigned, are now let at almost nominal prices to tenants who are content to dwell in peace in quiet habitations apart from the busy tide of commerce. The census, however, shows an increase in the population in the last ten years from 31,743 to 33,505.

But in the same period the population of Colombo has increased from 112,068 to 127,643, and its harbour is now crowded with ships of all nations. Sometimes fifteen to twenty steamers are simultaneously busy coaling and receiving or discharging cargo, Sunday and week-day alike—a terribly busy scene, and, as regards the Sunday work, very hard on all concerned,—and almost all, remember, whether sailors or landsmen, are British subjects. Of course the majority of these vessels are British merchantmen, but men-of-war of all nations come and go. On 20th May 1890 there were no fewer than six in harbour, three of which were Spanish, one French, and two British, and by a curious coincidence one of each nation was an admiral's flagship. That of the Spanish admiral, the Crucero Castilla, was a noble old wooden three-decker, such as Turner would have loved to paint. Then came the German and Dutch vessels, and two Japanese men-of-war conveying the survivors of a wrecked Turkish ship, the Ertugroul, back to their own country.

A considerable number of Russian vessels, men-of-war and others, have also found their way here, some bringing Grand Dukes, and the Tsarevitch himself, while one was conveying a new governor to Eastern Siberia, and another, alas! brought 644 luckless convicts *en route* from Odessa to their dreary Siberian exile. Amongst others was a Russian whaler on her way to the North Seas, and furnished with the newest thing in harpoons—horrible weapons, each carrying with it

a glass ball containing an explosive, which on striking the whale's body blows it into pieces, a method one would suppose better adapted for oiling the waves than for securing a cargo!

To provide additional space for anchorage, and also increased security for this ever-increasing traffic, a second great breakwater is about to be constructed to form a protecting northern arm, that the harbour may be absolutely first-rate.

After recording such a giant stride in Colombo's standing in the shipping world, the fact that her import of coal has in the last ten years risen from 8336 tons to 250,338 tons follows almost as a matter of course.

So month by month Colombo progresses and becomes more and more a place of resort, and her streets are thronged with human beings of every conceivable nationality and of every shade of colour—white, yellow, olive, sienna, cinnamon, and dark brown—and clad in divers uniforms, to say nothing of the wondrous variety of non-official raiment.

To facilitate their locomotion a large number of "jinrikishas" have been imported—*i.e.*, the "man-power carriage" of Japan, which is a lightly built bath-chair on two modern very large light wheels, very convenient for the person seated in it, whose weight *ought* to regulate the number of his human ponies. What a fortune the original inventor of these little machines might have made had he secured a patent for even the primitive form devised by some ingenious Japanese only about twenty years ago! Already in the city of Tokio alone there are upwards of 30,000 in constant use, and in Japan at large fully 200,000! And now the jinrikisha is as familiar and indispensable in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Penang, and Colombo, as in its native land. It may interest future

generations to know that the very first was imported into Ceylon in May 1883.

Meanwhile, during these same years, the grievous eollapse in the coffee trade left some sears on Colombo, where great coffee-stores, with all their once busy maehinery and erowds of workers, were deserted—grass and weeds overspreading the drying-grounds, and costly buildings being left to fall to deeay—a sorry aspect of dead trade whieh eannot be revived by the new produets of tea and eaeao, inasmueh as these are prepared for market on the estates where they are grown.

But on the other hand the eity has been improved and beautified in many ways, notably by the generous Jubilee gift of the late Governor, the Honourable Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, in the transformation of the old Fort Green (a small grassy eommon surrounded by "tulip" trees, and oeeasionally used as a ericket-ground) into a fine terraced garden, with banks of greenest turf, erowned by an octagonal fountain whenee eool waters flow by divers ehannels to supply other pools and fountains, in one of whieh the magnificent Vietoria Regia has already flowered freely. Here rosy oleanders, erotons of all gorgeous hues, feathery palms, and all manner of flowers lend fragranee and colour to what will heneeforth be the favourite afternoon lounge, more especially on those days when the excellent band adds the further attraetion of good musie.

From a business point of view Colombo has advanced prodigiously in general traffic, and many and various improvements mark progress in divers directions, giving evidence of the happily reviving energies of the Isle, and proving how well her adopted sons have now applied the dearly bought lessons of past experience.

The Colombo iron-works turn out work that would do credit to Newcastle, from the casting of iron pillars for the

Grand Hotel, to the building of steel barges, and the manufacturing of tea-machinery, and of sundry engines for use on land and sea; also the repairing of damaged vessels.

But foremost among the grand new industries is the steam cotton spinning and weaving factory, established on the brink of the Wellewatta Canal, on a site which, two or three years ago, was a dense jungle of neglected cinnamon. Now a huge factory has been erected, and 10,000 spindles and 150 looms are already busily at work, with every probability that ere long there will be such a demand for these home-made fabrics that 100,000 spindles, and looms to correspond, will find ample work.

Of course this must prove an immense incentive to the growth of cotton (the amount carried by the railway to Colombo advanced from 32 tons in the first year to 289 tons the following year), and doubtless thousands of acres of now waste jungle-land will shortly be transformed into busy cotton-fields.

The growing and weaving of cotton is no new thing in the Isle, for long before the Christian era both were extensively carried on, as were also the arts of bleaching and dyeing, and mention is made in the Mahawansa of a canopy in the ancient city of Anuradhapura, which was formed of eight thousand pieces of every hue. That was B.C. 161.

Early in the present century a large quantity of cotton was grown in the northern province, and was extensively manufactured by the weavers of Jaffna and Manaar till the imposition of a five per cent tax to Government on island-made cloth, instead of on imported cotton goods, in a great measure discouraged their industry. The weavers of Batticaloa on the east coast and Chilaw on the west, have long been famous for excellent bed and table linen, and the native looms of Saffragam and Galle turn out well-made white cottons.

According to official returns for 1887, there were then 15 hand-looms in the southern province, 21 in the north-western, 429 in the eastern, and 575 in the northern province. The cultivation of the cotton plant, however, has not been systematic, and its experimental growth by European planters has not been altogether encouraging, though a good deal has been grown by natives. Now, however, it has been satisfactorily proved that in certain soils it will grow well and bear abundantly, and cautious native capitalists deem its success so certain that they are forming companies for cotton-growing on a large scale, as well as investing largely in the Colombo mills.

Of course here, as in India, the giant steam-power will ruthlessly swallow up all the interesting native arts of hand-spinning and weaving, and already the weavers of Batticaloa have yielded to the inevitable, and have come to Colombo to learn the new methods and secure employment, and homes in the new village of comfortable cottages which the company are erecting for their workers.

One excellent thing in connection with these cotton spinning and weaving mills is, that the work thus provided has furnished the Wesleyan missionaries with the opportunity for establishing industrial homes and schools for destitute boys and girls. The Home has been erected close to the mills, which provide ample work for the young folk, whose board, lodging, and clothing, as well as moral and religious training, are the care of their missionary friends. This work of mercy is an all-round benefit, the manager of the mills being well pleased to have so reliable a staff of young workers always at hand, instead of having to look for an irregular supply from the villages.

I may add that simultaneously with the establishment of these industrial schools in Colombo, admirable schools of the

same class (though more of a reformatory character) have been established by another Wesleyan missionary, Mr Langdon, at Haputale, chiefly for the hitherto grievously neglected children in the province of Uva.

In concluding these introductory words, let me briefly forewarn travellers who purpose visiting India and Ceylon, that they will find the latter poorer in startling scenic effects. Here there are no mighty forts which seem to have been "built by giants and finished by jewellers"—no fairy-like lace-work sculptured in marble—no solemn grandeur of great Mohammedan mosques, nor bewildering intricacy of detail in sculpture as in the Hindoo temples; while, as compared with the marvellous rock-temples of India, those of Ceylon are grievously disappointing. Neither are there such striking street-scenes as one finds in many an Indian city, nor such bewildering crowds of gorgeously apparelled rajahs with their camels and elephants.[1] Therefore, for all such impressions, visit Ceylon first and India afterwards.

But, for archæological interest, the pre-Christian and mediæval cities of Ceylon, so long buried in the silent depths of the great forests, are altogether unique; and for luxuriant loveliness of tropical foliage, Tahiti itself cannot surpass this Isle of Palms.

I would fain hope that those who have patience to peruse these notes of two of the happiest years of my life, may discover something of the many attractions of Ceylon. Nevertheless, I fear that no words can adequately describe her fascination. So I can only advise all who have the power to travel leisurely, to go themselves and enjoy a winter there.

[1] For details of a never-to-be-forgotten year in Hindoostan, see 'In the Himalayas, and on Indian Plains.' By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by Chatto & Windus.

CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE TROPICS.

"Where Champac odours float,
Like sweet thoughts in a dream."

Aden *versus* Ceylon—Fragrant breezes—Canoes—Singhalese, Tamils, and Moormen—Singhalese love of gambling—Point de Galle—"Hothouse flowers" at home—Discordant voices—Fire-beetles—Phosphorescence—Corals—Cocoa-palms—View of Galle—Sail for Calcutta.

To begin with, let me recall my very first impressions of this paradise, when, *en route* to the Himalayas, we touched at Point de Galle, and there obtained our first glimpse of the tropics—a delight never to be excelled in any subsequent wanderings.

In those days there was no Suez Canal; so travellers were landed at Alexandria, and crossed Egypt to Suez, whence another steamer carried them down the Red Sea to Aden, and thence eastward.

It would be difficult to imagine contrast more complete, as opposite types of Creation, than the scenes thus successively revealed, like dissolving views in the panorama of travel—Aden and Ceylon—the former like a vision of some ruined world, the latter the very ideal of Eden: there a stifling atmosphere and scorching rocks, seemingly without one blade

of grass whereon to rest the wearied eye; here a balmy sleepy air, laden with the fragrance of our rarest hothouse flowers, clustering in densest luxuriance amid tangled mazes of infinitely varied verdure. Creamy blossoms with large glossy leaves; crimson and gold gleaming like gems, from their setting of delicate green shadow; an endless variety of tropical flowers growing in wild confusion over hill and plain; delicate creepers festooning the larger shrubs, and linking together the tall graceful palms with a perfect network of tendrils and blossoms, or finding their home in every crevice of the rocks, and veiling them with fairy drapery.

Every shrub is covered with young fresh leaves of many tints; for here we have perpetual spring as well as continual autumn, and though the ground is always strewn with withered leaves, new life is for ever bursting forth, in hues which we are wont to call autumnal, and which in Britain speak to us only of approaching winter and death. Some trees there are whose sombre foliage is always tipped with young leaves of vivid crimson; others which seem to change their leaves periodically, and which one week burst forth in brilliant scarlet, then gradually deepen to crimson, changing to olive; finally the whole tree becomes green.

Long before we sighted the beautiful Isle, the breath of these tropical forests "met us out on the seas"; and as so many people, who do not happen when nearing the coast to have been favoured with a land-wind, laugh at the idea of "spice-laden breezes," I may as well state that again and again in southern seas, even when out of sight of land (notably when passing Cape Comorin), I have for several hours been rejoiced by a balmy breeze off shore, like the atmosphere of a greenhouse, recalling the delicate scent of primulas. It has been as unmistakable as is the fragrance

of birch-woods in the Highlands after summer rain, or that of resinous fir-needles in the noonday sun.

As we neared the Isle, some of our party confessed themselves disappointed, even though we were favoured with a clear view of Adam's Peak, rising in solitary beauty above the blue mountain-ranges, right in the heart of the Isle. But in truth these lie so far inland that the unaccustomed eye fails to recognise their height; and the coast, with its endless expanse of cocoa-palm topes fringing the coral strand, is certainly somewhat monotonous as seen from the sea.

Not till we were gliding into the calm harbour did we realise the fascination of the scene, when, from those white sands overshadowed by palms, we espied curious objects coming towards us over the blue rippling water. In the distance they looked like great sea-spiders with very long legs; but as they approached and turned sideways, we saw that they were long narrow canoes, most curiously constructed, each being simply the hollow trunk of a tree, with raised bulwarks stitched on with twisted cocoa-nut fibre. They ride high on the water, and the long oars produce the spider-like effect aforesaid.

Some of the larger canoes are from forty to sixty feet in length, and carry many human beings; but the width is so small that there is never room for two persons to sit abreast. Of course such hollowed trees would inevitably roll over were they not balanced by a long heavy log, which, like the canoe itself, is pointed at both ends, and floats alongside at a distance of about ten feet, being attached to the boat by two strong bamboos tied on at right angles, thus staying the craft fore and aft.

This outrigger, as it is called, is applied on one side only, and must always be kept to windward, hence tacking is

impossible; so the canoe is constructed to go either backward or forward. The quaint brown sail forms a triangle between two bamboos, which meet in a point at bow or stern alternately; and when this is hoisted, the canoe literally flies before the breeze—the strength of which is described as a "one-man breeze" or a "two- or three-man breeze," according to how many human beings must help to steady the boat by adding their weight to that of the floating log, by either standing on it or on the connecting bamboos. Very picturesque are these lithe, rich brown figures, ever and anon half swamped by the waves, as they stand with rope in hand, ready at a moment's notice to haul down the sail. Most of the fishermen wear wide-brimmed straw hats, and scanty drapery consisting of a couple of gay pocket-handkerchiefs—one of which, knotted round the shoulders, perhaps displays a portrait of the Pope or of the Madonna, which, together with the small crucifix hanging from the neck, shows them to be members of the Church of Rome.

Even the tiniest canoes are balanced by the floating outrigger, so that very small children paddle themselves about the harbour in perfect safety; and a number of most fascinating little traders came round us offering fruit and coral for sale. Ere our vessel reached her moorings she was boarded by a crowd of merchants — we should call them pedlars—offering us curious treasures; but to us the sellers were far more interesting than their wares—especially the gentle, comely Singhalese, who in every respect contrast with the last brown race we had seen (namely, the hideous Somalis of Aden, with their fuzzy lime-washed yellow hair), just as strikingly as do the lands which gave them birth.

We very quickly learnt to distinguish three totally distinct elements in the crowd of brown men, each representing

totally different branches of the human family. The clear, sienna-coloured Singhalese, who number about sixty per cent of the total population, are of pure Aryan race, and are the descendants of the conquerors who adopted "Singha," a lion, as their emblem, and who in far back ages swept down from Northern India. The dark-brown Tamils hail from the Malabar coast in Southern India, and are of the Dravidian family. Some are descended from early conquerors, others are recruited year by year from the mainland to do the hard work of the Isle, and together these number about thirty-three per cent of the total population.

On the present occasion the leaders of the invasion were mostly Moormen, who, though few in proportion to the races aforesaid (numbering only six per cent of the whole), hold a very strong position, being the most energetic traders of the Isle. They claim to be descended from Arabian merchants who settled in Ceylon two thousand years ago, and so represent a third great branch of the human tree — namely, the Semitic. In complexion they are pale copper-colour, and the majority have black beards. Their shaven heads are crowned with high straw hats made without a brim, and these are often covered with a yellow turban. They are peculiarly well-built men, taller than either the delicately formed Singhalese or the sturdy Tamils.

Conspicuous among the latter are the Chetties or Hindoo merchants from the coast of India, who are easily recognised by their enormous ear-rings, and who are accompanied by coolies carrying bales of really precious merchandise, which they are only too anxious to unpack and display on the faintest chance of a sale.

Perhaps the readiest way of distinguishing between Tamils and Singhalese is that the former bear on their forehead the

symbol of the heathen god at whose shrine they have last worshipped — a spot, a circle, straight or curved lines in white, black, red, or yellow;[1] and also almost invariably retain their national head-dress, namely, the very becoming turban, — whereas (with the exception of the Anglicised clerks, who adopt European dress in every detail save that they wrap a long waist-cloth over their trousers) the low-country Singhalese of every degree are always bareheaded—their long, glossy, black hair, of very fine quality, being turned back from the face, held by a semicircular comb round the back of the head, and coiled at the back in a knot, which men of the wealthier classes secure by means of a handsome, very large tortoise-shell comb, which contributes another touch to the feminine appearance of the "pretty," and, for the most part, beardless men.

In truth, a new-comer is rather apt to think that all the Singhalese are women, and that the stalwart Moormen and Tamils are the sole lords of the creation! And the mistake is very natural, for men and women generally dress almost alike—with neat white jacket, and a long white cloth wrapped round the waist, so as to form a very tight skirt down to the ankles. This is called a *comboy*, and a more inconvenient walking-dress could not be imagined. The men are almost as slender and delicate in figure as the women, and have very small hands — in fact, the most obvious distinction between the sexes is that the tortoise-shell comb is a masculine monopoly, the women generally fastening their hair with silver pins. I observed that the firmly coiled back hair is used by both men and women as a convenient receptacle for pins and needles!

[1] For full details of these, see 'In the Himalayas,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming, pages 23, 24. Published by Chatto & Windus.

Tortoise-shell forms one of the most attractive items in Ceylonese manufactures. Beautiful combs of all shapes and sizes—bracelets, chains, bunches of charms—some of the palest amber, some dark and mounted in silver. The palest yellow is by far the most valuable, being, I believe, formed of the tortoise claws only.

Jewellers are numerous, for the gems of Ceylon are far-famed; but of course the fact that (with the exception of diamonds and emeralds) every known gem is found on the Isle leads to an amazing amount of cheatery, and vast numbers of sham jewels are pawned off on unwary travellers. "Damned-fool steamboat gentlemen" is, I regret to say, the name by which this section of the white race is commonly described by the astute natives.

Most of these sham gems are manufactured in the isle of Murano, near Venice, and are thence sent to Britain, where they are set in purest gold from the mines of Birmingham, and then forwarded to Ceylon, amongst other christianising influences of civilisation. They are known to the merchants as "steamboat jewels," and offered at fabulous prices, which are liable to amazingly swift reduction. Each trader describes his own store as a priceless collection of real stones, whereas all his neighbours have only real glass!

Then there are vendors of cinnamon-sticks, of ebony and ivory carving, of grass shoes, of beautifully carved boxes of sandal-wood, of coral shells, and fruit. We were chiefly captivated by bird-sellers, who coaxed us to buy whole families of darling little green love-birds, and who proved how tame they were by perching the tiny creatures on each wire of our sunshades, where they walked about happily and contented. Vain were the friendly warnings which whispered of most villanous love-potions, and told how the dainty birds

had been drugged for the market. Of course we invested largely, and for the rest of the voyage our time was divided between feeding our lovely playthings with sugar-cane, and rescuing them from dangers and perils of open ports, cold baths, and unwary footsteps. One or two of them did manage to walk out of the window in our cabin, and our aviary met with divers mischances before we reached Calcutta.

We were soon instructed in the detestable Eastern custom of offering a quarter of the price asked, and gradually rising till the buyer meets the seller half-way, and while so doing we witnessed an instance of the extraordinary love of gambling which is one of the most striking peculiarities of the Singhalese—a weakness well known to old travellers, and occasionally taken full advantage of. It seems as if no bet could be proposed too ludicrous for some one in the crowd to take it up, no terms too preposterous.

The case in point was that of a lady who was bargaining for a very beautiful large tortoise-shell comb. The price asked was high, that offered was so absurdly low that it was at once refused, and the matter dropped. Just then a bystander said jokingly, "I'll toss you whether I give you the sum she offered, or nothing." "Done," was the reply. The merchant won the toss, and pocketed the ludicrously small sum without a murmur, the lady receiving the coveted comb as a memorial of Singhalese gambling.

Of course we very soon found our way ashore, and explored the old fortress and batteries which tell of the successive occupation of Galle by the Portuguese and Dutch, each of whom left abiding traces on the Isle, in the form of fortifications, churches, and houses; while their descendants form distinct bodies in the heterogeneous population which has

drifted hither from so many lands—Persia, China, Malacca, Arabia, Coromandel, and Northern India, to say nothing of the pale-faced races of Europe.

I cannot say that the handiwork of the Dutch is generally poetic, but here all prosaic details are glorified by the wealth of vegetation, and even the fortress and the streets are shaded by Suriya trees—*i.e.*, the yellow *Thespesia populnea*, whose delicate straw-coloured blossoms contrast so beautifully with its dark glossy leaves. And the pleasant bungalows, with their wide pillared verandahs, which form the coolest and most delightful resting-place in the heat of the day (being invariably furnished with comfortable chairs), are one and all embowered in gardens where all lovely things grow in rank profusion, veiling the pillars and half-covering the roof —exquisite blue clitoria, orange venusta, purple passion-flowers, lilac and white clematis, mingling their starry blossoms with those of the glorious crimson tacsonia and splendid blue or white convolvulus; and luxuriant fuchsias, while heliotrope, gardenias, and roses blend their fragrance with that of the loquot and orange-blossom, and with the breezy freshness of the sunny sea.

Of course we experimentalised on all manner of Eastern fruits, doubly tempting because offered by such comely and gentle brown people, and amongst other novelties we proved the excellence of bright-green ripe oranges, followed by a more serious luncheon of pine-apples and divers curries of superlative excellence, after which we started for a drive, so as to make the best possible use of the exquisite afternoon.

Our road lay through groves of graceful and luxuriant palms, bread-fruit, and jak trees with their glossy foliage and huge fruit, and thickets of flowering-shrubs, whose delicious fragrance scented the air. Here and there we passed

a group of Flamboyants—magnificent trees, well named "the Flame of the Forest," so gorgeous are the masses of scarlet and gold blossom, which in May and June rest on delicate feathery foliage of dazzling green. Especially fascinating to us was the *Hibiscus mutabilis*, a shrub whose masses of rose-like blossoms daily change from white to crimson. Each morning sees the bush covered with newly opened flowers gleaming like freshly fallen snow, and ere the sun sets all have assumed a lovely rose-colour.

Exquisite living creatures, gossamer-winged, skimmed through the blossoming forest in this sweet summer-world. Amid the flame-coloured and golden blossoms flitted splendid butterflies, some pale-blue, some yellow, others velvety black with crimson spots, and brilliant metallic-looking dragon-flies.

Flowers familiar to us only in stoves and hothouses were there in wild luxuriance—ipomeas, convolvuli, orchids, the quaint pitcher-plant, and many another blossom; while ferns which we deem rare and precious formed a rich undergrowth of golden-green, the loveliest of all being the climbing-ferns, which, creeping on delicate hair-like stem, form a tangle of exquisitely dainty foliage veiling trees and shrubs. In some districts I have seen these growing to such a height, and hanging from the trees in such masses, that the natives cut them as we would cut bracken, and use them for thatch, the long black stems reaching down to the ground, and acting as rain-conductors.

Here and there clumps of graceful bamboo waved their feathery branches; and broad shining leaves of the yam, resembling huge caladiums, and the still larger and more glossy plantain, clustered round the picturesque native huts, whence pleasant, cheery-looking people or

curious small brown children came to offer us flowers or wonderful toys, made of strips of palm-leaf, twisted into stars, wheels, birds of paradise, and all manner of strange forms, suspended on long thin grasses, so as to tremble and quiver with a breath—most ingenious creations.

What these people may really be, a casual traveller cannot of course judge, but they look like embodiments of contentment: their rich mellow bronze colouring is most attractive, while their soft brown eyes suggest deep wells of quiet thought. It does seem so strange at first to be in a land where *all* eyes are brown, and *all* hair black, and straight, and silky!

Before these novelties had lost their first charm we had reached Wakwella, a hill clothed with cocoa and other palms, overlooking a fair valley, richly wooded, and through which the Gindura, a broad river glittering like silver, and with a thousand silvery veins, was winding westward through vividly green rice-fields to the sea.

We sat on a grassy headland and watched the soft grey and blue and gleaming green blending in the silvery sea. Presently, as the sun lowered, the light grew golden, and poured in misty rays of glory, adding its dreamlike beauty to the forests of cocoa-palms and the ranges of lovely hills. It was a scene of intense peace, only marred, as is too often the case, by the human voice—doubtless the raw material for perfect music hereafter, but, as a general rule, strangely discordant with nature's calm in its present crude form.

I have sometimes listened in amazement to discussions as to the relative anguish of losing sight or hearing, and have marvelled almost invariably to hear the crown of sorrow awarded to the latter! Just think of the endless variety of joy which the soul drinks in through the eye, compared with

the very divided pleasures of hearing—the countless harmonies of form and colour on which the eye rests unwearied with ever new delight, compared with the few chords of melody in all the jarring world of sound. How few notes that are never discordant! How few voices that never become wearisome, for no other reason than just because they *are* sounds! It seems as if perfect silence was the one joy of life most hopelessly unattainable.

So, at all events, we thought on that calm evening, the repose of which was utterly destroyed by the arrival of many fellow-creatures. There was nothing for it but to make a mutual-protection party, bound by a solemn vow of silence, and to retreat to the farthest spur of the hill, where we might sit and drink in the loveliness of that strange dreamy shore, while earth's many voices sang soft lullabies, and soothed us to rest.

Even here, however, all harmony was marred by one jarring sound, namely, the everlasting hum of the cicala, whose myriad army holds its noisy revel in every Eastern grove, utterly destroying what should be the principal charm of the solemn forests—the vainly longed-for silence. But as the sun sank below the horizon a sudden stillness fell on all insect-life, like the sudden stopping of machinery. The ear could scarcely realise relief so sudden. Then we were conscious that the noisy bipeds had likewise all departed with the daylight, and that we too must follow.

Beautiful night-moths appeared, hovering among the blossoms with tremulous flutter and sudden dart like humming-birds. Then through the darkening foliage flashed a thousand fire-flies in mazy circling dance, suggesting the invisible presence of Titania and her maidens, crowned with pale-green flames. These spirit-lights appear and disappear

suddenly, as each insect, at its own sweet will, shows or veils its fairy beacon—a tiny intermittent spark. These dainty torch-bearers are in reality minute beetles, not much bigger than a house-fly, and their light would wane in presence of their West Indian cousins, which the natives carry in dry gourds, riddled with holes, and which are so brilliant that a dozen of them act instead of a lantern.

Returning to Galle, we found about two hundred people at the hotel — passengers from half-a-dozen different ships bound for all corners of the earth. The prospect of a noisy *table-d'hôte* dinner seemed too much out of keeping with our recent impressions, so we preferred returning to our floating home.

Never can I forget the glory of the heavens that night and the brilliancy of the stars, all of which were mirrored in the calm harbour, which likewise glittered with gleaming reflections of many-coloured lights on land and ships. The water seemed doubly still and dark by contrast with the pallid white phosphorescence that played along the surface —sometimes in quivering tongues of fire, intensely bright, dazzling like electric light, then fading away to reappear a moment later in fitful ghostly gleams. It is a pulsating light, like that of the pale lambent flame of the Aurora. So fascinating was this scene that for hours we sat on deck watching it, sometimes shooting along the water in coruscations of fire, sometimes just rippling into golden sparkles like sea-stars; following in the wake of every tiny boat, and touching her sides with living flame, while each stroke of the oars flashed fire, and each leaping fish scattered a starry spray.

Is it not wonderful to think of the myriads of luminous animalcules which must exist to produce these mysterious

submarine illuminations! I am told that they are of all colours, blue, white, and green, and so tiny that it is calculated that fifty thousand would find ample swimming space in a small wine-glass of water! The commonest of these microscopic creatures is something like a tiny melon, but their forms are very varied.

I had the good fortune once to travel in the same ship with a naturalist possessed of an excellent microscope, and a very delightful companion he proved, day by day conjuring up new marvels from the exhaustless treasure-house of the deep. One small bucket did all the work of his Lilliputian fisheries, and brought him a never-failing harvest of strange wonderful creatures, of which he then made most faithful paintings, of course magnified a thousand-fold. But the tiny prisoners resented having to sit for their portraits, and wriggled restlessly till they attained to a *nirvana* of their own, and evaporated altogether!

At daybreak we again hailed one of those marvellous native outriggers, and, pointing to a bay of pure white sand, overshadowed to the water's edge with cocoa-palms, made our brown brethren understand that there we must go. As we neared the shore, and looked down through the transparent depths of that lovely sea, we could distinguish beautiful corals and strange water-plants. No "dim water-world" is here, but a sea of crystal, revealing its treasures with tantalising clearness, while each rippling wavelet cast its shadow on the rocks and sand far below.

At last we reached the little bay, whose white coral sand was thickly strewn with larger fragments of the same, as though flakes of sea-foam had suddenly been petrified by some fairy touch. Of course the charm of collecting these was irresistible. Soon we had heaped up a little mountain

of treasures, while our rowers looked on in much amusement and tried to explain to us that it was altogether poor stuff we had found.

Then from a hut on the tope came a kindly pleasant-looking family, men, women, and boys, clothed in white raiment (as beseems dwellers in Paradise), and laden with all manner of beautiful corals brought up from the reef. It was so early that their morning toilet was incomplete, and the men's long silky hair floated on their shoulders.

Some merry little brown natives swarmed up the cocoa-palms, and threw us down young creamy nuts. It was very curious to watch them run up and down the tall smooth stems, simply knotting a strip of cloth round themselves and the tree, so as to give them a "lean-to" for their back. Then, by sheer pressure of feet and hands and knees, they worked their way up to the leafy crown.

The nuts selected for us were scarcely half ripe, so that the rind, instead of being hard wood, as in the old nuts which are exported to England and other distant lands, is still green like the shell of an unripe walnut, and the inside coated with transparent cocoa-nut jelly. Besides this, each nut contains a good tumblerful of sweet cool water, a very different fluid from what we find in the old nuts that reach England. Nevertheless, all new-comers ought to be warned that this is a delicacy which does not suit all constitutions; and however refreshing a drink of young cocoa-nut milk may be, it is well for the unacclimatised to partake sparingly. Happily, on the present occasion none of the party suffered for their imprudence, although we feasted freely, while sitting beneath the palms, which spread their tender film of quivering foliage overhead, like the fairy web of some great gossamer spider.

This, remember, was in December; and as we revelled in the soft blessed atmosphere, which made each breath we drew a sensation of joy, and the mere fact of existence a delight, a vision rose before us of how differently it fared with all at home—some on the moors, perhaps, battling with storm and blinding sleet; others in the murky city. The very thought of mists and sleet, and of the many fireless homes where wretched tattered beings shiver in squalid misery, jarred too painfully; so there was nothing for it but to try and forget Old England altogether, and think only of the loveliness around us—land, sea, and sky, each perfect in their beauty, and human beings who seemed to us as gentle and gracious as they are graceful.

Near us rose a group of stately Areca palms, faultlessly upright, like slender alabaster pillars, in this leafy sanctuary, each crowned with such a capital of glossy green as human architect never devised. But more beautiful in our eyes were the cocoa-palms bending in every direction, each stem averaging from seventy to eighty feet in height, and crowned with fronds far longer and more graceful than those of the Areca, and with several large clusters of fruit in all stages, the golden nuts hanging down, the younger, greener ones above; and, to crown all, two or three lovely blossoms, like gigantic bunches of cream-coloured wheat carved in purest ivory, each long wheat-head having at its base a small white ball, which is the embryo nut. Each bunch numbers thirty or more of these heads, and about eight or ten of the nuts come to perfection. The blossoms in their infancy are enclosed in a hard sheath, which bursts when the flower expands, and is then useful for many household purposes. I think this grain-like blossom is one of the loveliest things in creation; and well do the chiefs know its value for all

purposes of decoration, resulting too often in lamentable waste of poor men's property.

The contrast of the graceful growth of the cocoa-palm (which generally bends towards the nearest water) with the straight heavenward growth of the Areca, is noted in a native proverb, which says that he who can find a straight cocoa-palm, a crooked Areca, or a white crow, shall never die. The Areca palm bears large clusters of hard nuts—perhaps 200 on a tree—about the size and consistency of nutmegs, which, like the cocoa-nut, are encased in an outer husk of fibre. These are to these natives what tobacco is to the Briton, especially in the form dear to our sailors, the nuts being cut into thin hard slices, several of which, with the addition of a pinch of lime, are wrapped up in a glossy leaf of the betel-pepper, forming a mouthful, the chewing of which furnishes occupation for a long time, resulting in free expectoration—if possible, even more disgusting than that of a tobacco-chewer, from the fact that the saliva is blood-red.

We were sorely tempted to linger in this beautiful shady grove, but a glimpse of a wooded hill beyond carried us onward; so, taking a couple of the young brownies to guide us along a slight native track, we plunged into a jungle of exquisite tropical plants—the strange screw-pine with its pillared roots, and scarlet pine-apples, dear only to monkeys, glossy leaves and rough leaves in endless variety, old forms and new, plants which we knew from pictures and from description; creepers and climbers of exceeding beauty, and in endless profusion.

Then, as we scrambled up the rough narrow path, there burst upon us a scene of inconceivable beauty. On the one side we looked over masses of vegetation and reddish cliffs

to the bluest of blue seas, edged with white surf. Beyond lay Point de Galle with its white lighthouse.

On the other side the same blue sea, washing the long shore of white sand; then range beyond range of forest-clad hills, behind which far-away blue peaks rose to a height of from six to seven thousand feet. But, in truth, it is mere folly to attempt to describe such a scene. No words or pictures can tell of the myriad beauties which link all these divers parts into one perfect whole—the joyous sunlit atmosphere and the restless repose of the calm azure sea, enfolding a land beautiful beyond expression.

It was with many a lingering backward look, such as our first parents are said to have cast on the same fair Isle ere they were driven hence, that we at length tried to leave this Paradise; and, retracing our steps through the beautiful jungle, found ourselves once more beneath the cocoa-palms, where our little brown friends awaited us with stores of creamy half-ripe nuts and lovely corals, with which our curious canoe was quickly laden.

A few hours later with exceeding regret we bade farewell to the beautiful Isle of Palms, and with our little cabin half full of corals and green love-birds, and sugar-cane to feed them with, we once more held on our course, with a sadly diminished party, and many stale jokes (scarcely jokes to a good many) about the said Point of *Gall*,[1] and all its sorrowful partings from those whose paths lay farther and farther towards China and Japan and the uttermost isles.

[1] The name of Galle is derived from the Singhalese *galla*, a rock.

CHAPTER II.

COLOMBO.

The native town—St Thomas's College—The Fort—The lake—Suburbs—White ants—Cinnamon Gardens.

About three years slipped away—years into which were crowded all the marvellous interests of sight-seeing in India and elsewhere, and of a first return to a wide and very sympathetic home-circle in the old country. (Probably none save those to whom years have brought home life's gravest lesson of many lifelong partings, can fully realise how greatly the pleasure of wandering in far lands is enhanced by the certainty of the interest and ever-ready sympathy with which letters from the wanderer will be welcomed by loving kinsfolk beside their own firesides, nor how much of the incentive to travel seems to pass away when strangers fill the once familiar homes.)

So pleasant memories were the earnest of pleasant days to come, when an invitation from the Bishop of Colombo tempted me to face the wintry seas in bleak November, hoping possibly to reach Ceylon by Christmas. But a week of wild storms in the English Channel, and a very narrow escape of foundering off the Eddystone Rock, resulted in our fine new steamer barely succeeding in making Plymouth

harbour, and her passengers explored the beauties of Cornwall and Devon till another steamer was ready to take them on their journey.[1]

This eventful double voyage proved a time of lifelong interest to several young couples on board, and indeed welded all our ship's company into such general harmony and kindliness, that the "Hindoo-Othello" passengers were thenceforward a recognised brotherhood in Ceylon. Some, I fear, were heavy of heart when the last evening came, and all lingered late in the starlight, enjoying the delicious scent of jungle-flowers, which the balmy land-breeze brought us as a greeting from the forests of Southern India.

I need scarcely say that as we neared the beautiful isle, some of us were on deck with the earliest glimmer of dawn, and were rewarded by a glorious crimson and golden sky, long before the sunrise—a red horizon against which Adam's Peak and the lower mountain-ranges stood out sharp and clear in purple relief, just as plainly as I had previously seen them from Galle, from which, indeed, the Peak is about equidistant.

Soon after 7 A.M. we anchored in Colombo Roads (for the great breakwater which has endowed Colombo with her present noble harbour, is a creation of later date), and very quickly our steamer was surrounded by wonderful native canoes of all sizes, and boats of heavier build, bringing friends to meet the new-comers. Soon the Bishop arrived himself, with the kindest of welcomes for me, and for a pleasant new addition to his clerical staff, and a few minutes later we were in a big boat, being rowed ashore by Tamil boatmen, who cheered their toil by singing wild songs with wilder refrain to

[1] See 'Via Cornwall to Egypt.' By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by Messrs Chatto & Windus.

the accompaniment of plashing oars, reminding me of the Gaelic songs of the Skye boatmen.

The Bishop's carriage awaited us at the landing-place. Here, as in India, each horse is accompanied by its own horsekeeper, lightly dressed, and barefooted, but with large scarlet turban and sash, for in Çeylon these men are all Tamils. Whatever be the distance and whatever the pace, they pride themselves on running abreast of the horses, ready to help in any emergency, and shouting to secure a clear way through the crowded streets.

We had good need of their services, for our way lay through the Pettah, or native town, thronged by an ever-fascinating kaleidoscope of infinitely varied human beings, all picturesque, forming a succession of groups of living bronzes, each a study for an artist. Only, alas! even the very first close glimpse of these revealed that suffering has a footing in Paradise, for we saw a van full of semi-nude lunatics from the asylum taking a morning drive, and several poor creatures with limbs swollen and distorted with elephantiasis, and (more painful still, because caused by human callousness, though the charge of deliberate cruelty is repudiated) we were sickened by the sight of the pretty little bullocks, drawing the native carts, all alike covered with most elaborate patterns of curls and curves like intricate Runic knotting, either branded or cut in narrow strips right into the hide. When the scars have healed, they produce a result as beautiful in native eyes as are in their own sight somewhat similar scars on the bodies of various savage tribes.

But to see the poor beasts who have recently undergone this process, literally covered with these carefully manufactured raws, in many cases festering and a prey to clouds

of flies, is simply revolting. In defence of so cruel a practice the owners of the bullocks maintain that not only is this a preventive of cattle-stealing, but also a safeguard against rheumatism. It has even been asserted that in some cases animals have been "hide-bound" and never could be induced to fatten till their hides had been thus destroyed.

Were it not for this detail, these pretty little zebus, with their humped neck and deep dewlap, their silky skin and slender limbs, are very attractive. The majority are black, but many are silvery grey. In lieu of reins and a bit, a hole is bored through the nostril, and the poor beasts are guided by a rope passed through the nose. Some are very fast trotters, and native gentlemen drive them at a rattling pace in small hackeries. Larger palm-thatched carts or "bullock-bandys," but similarly balanced on two wheels, are used for general traffic. We passed some of these full of women and children, all brown and black-haired and black-eyed, and all smiling and chattering, and glittering with jewellery and gay with coloured draperies. The driver of the bullocks stalks along between them and the cart, tall, brown, and black-bearded, with little clothing, carrying a cane for the encouragement of his good cattle. One marvels how these active little creatures can draw such heavy weights simply by the pressure of the wide projecting yoke against the hump on their necks. For heavier traffic larger-humped cattle have been imported from India, and Ceylon itself supplies a stronger variety of bullocks of a dark-red colour.

Old residents, as a rule, rather dislike having to drive through this or any other native town, but to me it was always a pleasure, as each moment revealed some thoroughly Eastern scene; and though the houses are for the most part dingy and very poor, chiefly built of mud or bamboos, and

roofed with wooden shingles or dry palm-leaves, yet in this brilliant sunlight they give depths of rich-brown shadow as a background to many a bit of sparkling colour; and then the fact of their being all open and revealing all manner of domestic incidents in the home-life of races so widely different as Moors and Malays, Singhalese and Tamils, Dutch and Portuguese burghers, is full of interest to a new-comer. Many of the simple toilets are performed in the open street, especially the work of the Tamil barber, who squats on his feet facing his victim, who likewise squats with his head resting on his own knees, while the barber shaves it till it shines like a billiard-ball. It is so funny to see quite small boys being thus shaven!

All the shops are likewise open, with their varied goods—piles of brass lotas, and earthenware chatties, gay cheap cottons, fish of strange form and vivid colour, beside the familiar whiting, mullet, and soles. One which we soon learnt to appreciate is the seer-fish, which is rather like salmon, but with white flesh. Of course the vegetable stalls are attractive, but especially so the bewildering variety of tempting fruits, looking only too inviting as laid out in piles on cool, green banana-leaves,—large luscious pine-apples, heaps of very bright-green ripe oranges, golden mangoes, custard apples, melons, fine gourds and splendid pumpkins, pumeloes (*i.e.*, shaddocks), limes, guavas, bananas, papaws, lovi-lovis, durians, rambutans, bullocks'-hearts, sour-sops, sometimes even figs and grapes—why, these alone were an earnest of Paradise to one who had so recently escaped from a stormy winter in England! One fruit new to me, and very insinuating, was the rambutan. When ripe its rough skin changes from green to rich scarlet, and within lies a ball of cool, pleasant jelly, very refreshing. A hard uneatable kernel

lies in the centre. Another very attractive little fruit, with most fragrant blossom, was the loquat, which belongs to the medlar family.

Some of the best shops in the Pettah are kept by Parsees and Moormen, who retail all manner of European goods; but a really Eastern stall is that of the money-changer, who sits on his mat amid heaps of copper and silver coin. So is that of the grain-seller, the chettie from Southern India, with his large turban and enormous ear-rings. The carrier of drinking-water is also characteristic. So is the earthenware chattie, painted white and stuck on the roof to attract the glance of the passer-by, and so lessen the danger of the evil eye.

We passed Buddhist and Hindoo temples and Mohammedan mosques, but the latter seemed poor and insignificant as compared with those of India, which remained so vividly impressed on my memory. But presently our route lay through a grove of beautiful cocoa-palms, beside the blue sea, and no odious mental comparisons marred the loveliness of that scene. Our destination was St Thomas's College, in Mutwal, the north-eastern suburb of the city, distant about two miles from the Fort, which is the great business centre. The College stands in the same compound,[1] or grounds, as Christ Church Cathedral, which is primarily the chapel of the college and collegiate school, founded in 1852 by Dr Chapman, the first Bishop of Colombo (Ceylon having previously been included in the see of Madras). It is also, however, the parish church of a large English and English-speaking community, as also of the Singhalese Christians in Mutwal.

Between the Cathedral and the College stands the Bishop's

[1] From the Portuguese *campao*, an enclosure.

house,[1] where two large airy rooms were assigned to me, opening on to a wide pleasant verandah supported by columns, the whole coated with cool white chunam, and embowered in a luxuriant growth of flowering creepers of all gorgeous colours—scarlet and crimson, purple, orange, and vivid blue. Moreover, there were comparatively few days when we were not blessed with a delicious sea-breeze; and, indeed, though the deep-blue ocean itself was wellnigh hidden from us by waving palms and great India-rubber and other trees, we had only to descend a few hundred yards to find ourselves on its beautiful beach, where, no matter how calm the day, the great green rollers break in glittering surf on the yellow sands or dark rocks.

To a new-comer it is inconceivable that any one could ever weary of such delicious balmy air and luxuriant vegetation. And yet one home-sick Briton expressed the thought of many when he told me that he would give all the lovely tropical scenery for the sight of a good honest turnip-field, while another only craved for "a good healthy shiver."

St Thomas's College receives about 60 boarders, and the collegiate school has an average daily attendance of about 250 lads and young men, some of whom are pure Singhalese or Tamil, others are members of burgher families—*i.e.*, descendants of early Dutch or Portuguese colonists—while a considerable number are half-castes. Almost all the boarders and about four-fifths of the students are Christians, the proportion in 1890 being 260 Christian and 43 non-Christian pupils. Of the latter, some are Buddhists and some Hindoos, who accept the inevitable Christian instruction for the sake of the first-class secular education here given. A very well-

[1] This has been given over by the present Bishop to the Warden of the College.

supported cricket club, a workshop with forge and lathe, and a Natural History Society, are among the details which suggest the varied interests of boy-life.

A high-class school for girls occupies a pretty bungalow close to the Cathedral.

Another very important centre of education is the Royal College, which was founded in 1836 by Sir Robert Horton, for the higher education of natives of the Isle. In August 1891 its students numbered 331, while those at St Thomas's numbered 333—a state of things highly creditable to the latter, inasmuch as the former is a Government college, backed by public revenue. A generous rivalry exists between these two colleges and those of India, those of Ceylon securing a full share of honours in regard to English university scholarships and Cambridge local examinations; so there is no lack of healthy emulation to keep up the standard of learning.

St Thomas's College supplies choristers with very pleasant voices, for the daily morning and evening choral services in the Cathedral, where the week-day congregation consists chiefly of young men from the College, who look delightfully cool in their white jackets and comboys, the Singhalese lads being readily distinguished by their tortoise-shell combs.

In connection with the Cathedral is a mission for the training of native clergy—Tamil and Singhalese—to whom are apportioned various districts of Colombo, in which they minister to their own fellow-countrymen, and to the hitherto neglected Portuguese half-castes and other classes.

Certainly no one here can plead lack of opportunity as an excuse for non-attendance at church services. Besides several Episcopal churches, there are Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Presbyterian, Dutch Presbyterian, Baptist, and

sundry other churches and chapels scattered over the town, and these (in addition to the services for the English-speaking community) have others in Tamil, Singhalese, and Portuguese, at such hours as may best suit domestic servants and others.

Notwithstanding his own incessant work, the Bishop most kindly arranged that I should accompany him on so many beautiful drives in the freshness of early morning, or the cool of the evening, that I very soon became tolerably familiar with the immediate neighbourhood and its inhabitants, feeling daily more attracted towards these gentle Singhalese, who seem always so quietly happy, always so polite, crossing their arms, and bowing so courteously, apparently never excited even when marketing — the fruitful source of oriental clatter! Even the pretty graceful children play gently, noisy romping seeming altogether foreign to their nature. The girls (poor little dears!) are early taught to stay chiefly indoors, and by twelve years of age they are generally married, and occasionally are grandmothers before they are thirty! They certainly are a very comely race, with their slender figure, shapely well-chiselled features, and splendid dark dreamy eyes.

Their homes seem to be the perfection of village life; each picturesque bamboo hut, with its thatch of cocoa-nut leaves, wholly concealed from its neighbours by the richest vegetation, and buried in cool shade of large-leaved plantains and bread-fruit trees; while above each little homestead waves the beneficent tree which supplies the family with meat and drink, and a thousand things besides.

Certainly, clean as these mud and wattle huts are, some fastidious people might object to the fact that the raised platforms of clay whereon the villagers lie basking in their

happy *dolce far niente* (enjoying a foretaste of Buddha's Paradise) are all plastered with cow-dung, which is said to keep away vermin, and to be less apt to become muddy in the rains than is a simple clay floor.

Here, beneath the palm thatch, the men spread their palm-leaf mats and sleep peacefully, wrapped in their white cloth, till sunrise awakens the birds. Then they bathe in the nearest stream, and wash their long glossy black hair, and for the next hour or two sit in the sunlight combing and drying it, and (alas!) renewing its gloss with unfragrant cocoa-nut oil. Then they carefully twist it into a smooth coil, fasten it with a circular tortoise-shell comb, and then rest again, perhaps weaving fanciful ornaments of split palm-leaf to decorate the entrance to the home, but certainly chewing the inevitable betel-leaf.

Meanwhile their wives are busy with the daily task of preparing curry—no fiery curry-powder, but a delicious compound of many pleasant vegetables, seasoned with pepper, turmeric, green ginger, chillies, &c., but above all, made fresh and wholly different every morning, and served with cocoa-nut, prawns, cucumbers, and all manner of other excellent dainties, served in different dishes, as we serve vegetables, forming combinations to rejoice the heart of an epicure. The principal glory of a Singhalese cook lies in the endless variety of his curries; a very desirable characteristic in a dish which forms a necessary conclusion to every meal, and on which you soon learn to count as a necessity. Every man, woman, and child, down to the very smallest, lives on curry and rice, indeed we had a theory that all domestic animals were fed on it. "To eat rice" is the recognised form of describing every meal, and wonderful is the amount consumed by each individual.

The practice I have already alluded to, of chewing betel, which is practised both by Tamils and Singhalese, is most obnoxious to the spectator, as it is accompanied by continual spitting of dark-red juice, which gives you the impression that the whole population are in the last stage of consumption, and that the ground on every side is stained with blood. It is truly disgusting! and is continually forcing itself on one's observation, which must plead my excuse for referring to it again.

The betel-leaf is rather like ivy, but more fleshy and glossy. In it the people wrap up a mixture of bits of hard areca-nut, and lime of burnt shells to give pungency. It discolours the mouth for the moment, and an habitual chewer is betrayed by the deep reddish-orange stain which has become chronic. Men and women alike seem to delight in this delicacy, though I never met a European who could endure it. However, it seems to be a wise instinct which teaches these vegetarians to consume so much lime, and it is said that the perpetual chewing of betel compensates for the deficiency of animal diet.

Of course to the passer-by these simple homes derive much of their charm from their surroundings, for the poorest is always embowered in sugar-cane, maize, or bananas; and I know no plant which so fully brings home to one the sense of tropical luxuriance as does each member of this wide-spread tribe of bananas and plantains, which contribute so largely to the food of the human race in all tropical countries. In one year it grows to a height of about 20 feet, each leaf being from 6 to 8 feet in length by about 2 in breadth, and each plant bearing perhaps a total of three hundred fruits in several heavy drooping clusters,—green, ripening to gold,—a total of about seventy pounds weight. Each fruit is enfolded in a thick leathery skin, which comes

off at a touch, yielding a sweet satisfying food of most delicate flavour, of which the bananas sold in England give a very faint idea. The effort of producing such a mass of fruit exhausts the generous plant, which then falls, leaving its strong fibrous stem and leaf-stalks to be turned to account in various ways. (One variety yields the fibre known as Manilla hemp.) Then new stems very quickly spring from the old root, and the splendid plant is renewed.

To the same family belongs the huge fan-shaped "Traveller's Tree,"[1] often carelessly described as a palm. It bears the same long broad leaves; but they are stiffly arranged, exactly like a great feather fan, and instead of bearing nourishing fruit like the common banana,[2] they collect water, which filters into the tightly plaited sheaths at the base of the leaves, whence a drink of pure water can always be drawn by stabbing the said base of a leaf.

The country all round Colombo is strangely level, and the soil is of a warm red colour. The red roads contrast curiously with the vividly green rice-fields and the luxuriant vegetation on every side.

Even the red streets are delightfully shaded by cool green *Suriya*, or sun-trees, so named on account of their delicate primrose-coloured blossoms, with claret-coloured heart, which, like the setting sun, turn red as they fade. (One of the titles of the ancient royal race was *Suriya-wanzac*, the race of the sun.) The flower curiously resembles that of the cotton plant, and also in form that of the single scarlet hibiscus, known to Europeans as the shoe-flower; but its grey-green leaves are totally different, rather resembling those of a poplar. Hence Linnæus named this tree *Hibiscus populneus*, but modern botanists have reclassed it as *Thespesia populnea*.

[1] *Ravenala madagascariensis*. [2] *Musa sapientum*.

As an everyday name, surely nothing could be more appropriate than Suriya; but Europeans generally speak of them as tulip-trees, from a very imaginary resemblance of the blossom to that familiar but less refined flower. Certainly it is in every respect unlike the true tulip-tree of North America.[1]

To me the Suriya recalls pleasant visions of the South Pacific isles, where it grows abundantly. In Fiji it is called the *Vau*,[2] and is greatly prized on account of the fibre of the inner bark, which is used by the fisher-folk for making turtle-nets, and also, when dyed of various colours, for making fringe-kilts. It is a most cheery little tree, always covered with sunny blossoms. Here its light hard-grained wood is prized for carriage-building and for gun-stocks. Like many other flowering trees which are widely spread over Ceylon, it is doubtful whether the Suriya is indigenous, though it has been found near Batticaloa apparently wild.

Both Galle and Colombo are indebted to the Dutch for these pleasant avenues, which transform their busiest business streets into cool boulevards. The new-comer on first landing derives from them his very earliest impression of green shade as he passes from the harbour to the Fort, which is the chief business centre—Queen's House (as the Governor's residence is here called), the Government offices, and the principal European shops being all within its haunts, which comprise about two square miles.

The fortifications crown a rocky headland between the sea and the large lake. On the land side there are four bastions,

[1] *Liriodendron tulipifera.*

[2] At Home in Fiji, vol. i. p. 83. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by W. Blackwood & Sons.

and gates with drawbridges, and seven batteries guard the seaward approach. The Fort was commenced by the Portuguese in A.D. 1518. The Dutch did not appear on the scene till 1602, and when in 1655 they besieged this Fort, it was accounted one of the largest and strongest fortresses in the East, the circuit of its walls being nearly three-quarters of a mile, while it was protected on one side by the sea, and on the other by the lake, which was then well stocked with man-devouring crocodiles.

So much reliance seems to have been placed on these natural advantages, that cocoa-palms had actually been planted on the fortifications; and though these were mounted by 237 cannons, their carriages were literally rotten from neglect, and in the hour of need had to be renewed with wood taken from shattered houses, and even from the churches. Moreover, so many buildings of all sorts were crowded within the walls, that it was simply a small enclosed town with a population of about 4000 persons, of whom only about 1200 were capable of bearing arms, the majority of these being half-castes.

On the approach of the Dutch, assisted by the troops of the King of Kandy, "the priests of the seven parishes of Colombo, accompanied by their terrified flocks, sought shelter from the advancing heretics within the walls." Its population was trebled, and then it was necessary to close the gates and refuse admission to any more fugitives. Then followed a prolonged siege, full of thrilling deeds of valour and hand-to-hand fighting. Probably the whole page of history contains no record more full of the terrible "romance" of war. Every man within the Fort was fighting for dear life, for the King of Kandy had stipulated that every native captured within the Fort should be given over to him, that he might

punish them as he had done those captured at Batticaloa, on which occasion he had impaled fifty living men, and had sold the rest with their wives and children to be slaves. This fate likewise befell such fishermen as were captured attempting to run the blockade and carry provisions to the besieged. As the siege advanced and provisions became scarcer, many natives attempted to escape, but all were ruthlessly driven back with whips, to add to the embarrassment of the besieged. And yet in the face of such horrors the Portuguese were weakened by internal strife, when blue-blooded hidalgos occasionally refused to obey the orders of their half-breed superior officers.

For seven long months the siege continued, all on both sides being on the alert day and night. It is recorded of the aged governor that during all that time he was never seen without his armour. Even the Jesuit fathers and the Augustines donned armour and defended the ramparts or fought in the trenches, leaving the care of the sick and wounded to the Dominicans, Capuchins, and Cordeliers. Their zeal was intensified by a sacrilegious act of the Dutch, who, having taken an image of St Thomas from its altar in a church beside the sea, had cut off its nose, ears, and arms, driven nails into it, and finally fired it from a mortar into the Fort. It fell into the ditch, whence it was rescued by the Portuguese at the peril of their lives, and carried in solemn procession to a place of honour on the high altar of the Church of the Cordeliers.

At the beginning of the siege there were fifteen elephants and many buffaloes within the Fort. One of the former was so very valuable as a catcher of wild elephants (having annually captured about thirty, valued at fifteen thousand crowns), that, although owing to prolonged drought there

was not a green herb within the Fort, it was somehow kept alive to the end of the siege, when it became a prize for the Dutch. But every other living creature, down to cats, rats, and dogs, was devoured, and wretched living skeletons subsisted on a daily handful of rice, till pestilence in the form of fever, dysentery, and a disease called *beri-beri*, of the nature of dropsy, broke out and thinned their ranks. Soldiers dropped dead on the ramparts from sheer exhaustion, and in one day 130 bodies were buried, search-parties going through the houses to carry out the dead. This during intense heat, aggravated by months without a drop of rain. Happily, however, the wells never dried up, and the besieged were spared the anguish of insufficient water. Nevertheless the recorded details of anguish during those terrible months are altogether sickening.

As the position became more and more intolerable many contrived to desert, though all who were caught were promptly hanged; a considerable number succeeded in swimming across the lake at night, preferring the risk of being devoured by crocodiles to the certain torture of starvation.

In the last extremity of famine, the Portuguese drove out all the surviving starving natives, and closed the Fort gates after them. The Dutch refused to let them pass. Thus they were hemmed in between the belligerents, and the whole party perished either from starvation or bullet-wounds.

In all history there is no more thrilling page than the story of this siege, with its daily hand-to-hand fights between the gaunt living skeletons who held the Fort, and their assailants. At last one morning at daybreak the Dutch carried all the outworks, and only the bastion of St John remained between them and the Fort. Of all its defenders

there survived only one brave captain and two boys. These were soon cut down, and the besiegers having captured the bastion, poured down on the Fort, supported by a strong body of Singhalese archers. Every man who was not utterly disabled, including almost all the priests, rushed to the defence, fighting with the desperation of men in their last extremity.

That handful of brave men, faint from starvation and exhaustion, held their ground the livelong day against a vastly superior force of well-fed Dutch and Kandyan troops; the fighting was almost all hand-to-hand, with swords and pistols and hand-grenades, and continued till the darkness compelled a truce.

The dead and wounded of both sides lay heaped together in ghastly piles. Among the slain was the brave Father Antonio Nunes, who early in the day was struck by a musket-ball, but, still fighting on, presently received a severe sword-cut. Triumphant over pain, the undaunted warrior-priest still held his ground, till he was killed by the explosion of a hand-grenade. But in that force each warrior was a hero.

It was evident that to prolong the struggle was hopeless, so, though some still voted for no surrender, honourable terms of capitulation were at last agreed on. The Dutch general undertook to protect all the inhabitants of the Fort, especially the women, and to care for all the sick and wounded; also to convey all soldiers and officers to Europe, or other Portuguese settlements; and on May 12, 1656, the garrison, consisting of 190 Portuguese soldiers and armed civilians, marched out with all the honours of war—a ghastly procession of living skeletons, many of whom were scarcely able to totter on their poor legs, swollen by *beri-beri*, and almost every man disabled by wounds or burning by gun-

powder. Even the Dutch could not restrain their pity and admiration of this band of heroes.

The priests, however, fearing with good reason that protection would not be extended to their sacred relics, images, and consecrated vessels, hastened to conceal these, and to unfurnish all altars in the churches, lest they should be profaned by the heretics who had dealt so cruelly with the image of St Thomas.

When the Fort had thus been evacuated by its defenders, the Dutch marched in, and the standard of the Prince of Orange was planted on the Water Fort, a dearly bought prize, said to have cost the Dutch the lives of upwards of three thousand soldiers, besides many of their bravest officers, and an enormous outlay in money. It proved, however, the key to mastery on the Isle, the Portuguese being soon afterwards compelled to cede all their possessions.

They held the Fort of Colombo till February 1796, when in their turn they were besieged by the British, and capitulated after a very much feebler resistance, with few such thrilling incidents as those which formed the everyday history of the seven months' siege.

Finally, in 1869, the walls of the Fort were demolished by its present masters.

As we have seen, during the Portuguese occupation no less than five religious orders were established within the Fort — namely, the Jesuits, Augustines, Dominicans, Cordeliers, and Capuchins, each having its separate monastery and chapel. Of their hospitals, colleges, and monasteries no trace remains, but an interesting memorial of that period was discovered about fifty years ago, when, in carrying out some repairs near the Battenburgh bastion, a large stone was discovered, with an inscription stating that beneath it lay

the body of Juan Monteiro, the first Primate of Ceylon, who died here A.D. 1536.

The city of Colombo covers a very large area, its various suburbs being separated by cocoa-palm groves, amongst which the houses of the wealthier inhabitants stand apart, each in its own large garden; many are scattered about all through the wide semi-jungle, still known as the Cinnamon Gardens, and many more are dotted all along the shores of the fresh-water lake, which ramifies in so many directions that one keeps coming to it again and again, but never too often, for each fresh glimpse shows some new combination of luxuriant foliage, and most carefully cultivated flowering trees and shrubs. Some such groups form memory-pictures of delight —as, for instance, in the months of April and May, the Flamboyant (*Poinciana regia*), with its indescribably gorgeous masses of scarlet and golden blossom and delicate velvety green foliage. Or the splendid drooping clusters, also scarlet and yellow, of the *Amherstia nobilis*, which blooms all the year, though most glorious from Christmas to Easter. These relieved by the lovely lemon-yellow of the "lettuce" tree, which gleams like embodied sunlight, contrasting with the blue-green of the screw-pine and the dark casurina, or the feathery misty foliage of clumps of tall graceful bamboo, all in perfect harmony with the soft pearly grey of the sky, and all reflected in the still lake.

Here and there are dark hibiscus all aglow with crimson blossom, or long pendant boughs of poinsettia, with gorgeous scarlet rosettes of young foliage in wondrous contrast with the rich green of the older leaves, splendid yellow allamandas, cassias loaded with blossom like our richest laburnum, ironwood (*Mesua ferrea*) with fragrant large white blossoms and tufts of young bright crimson foliage, jaggery, areca,

talipot, and date palms, palmyra palms with their great fan-like leaves ceaselessly rustling with every breath of air, the ever-quivering fronds of the cocoa-palm glancing in the sunlight, like gleaming swords, and, most restless of all, the huge leaves of the banana ever waving—the young leaves like lovely ribbed silk of the most exquisite green, the older leaves torn by their own ceaseless motion into fluttering yellow ribbons.

One of these very attractive "lake districts" still bears the unpleasant name of Slave Island, recalling the days when, under Dutch rule, the State slaves were there imprisoned every night, a prey to the mosquitos, which, alas! abound in this warm moist neighbourhood, and but for skilfully arranged mosquito-nets, effectually murder sleep. Their hateful note "ping" comes in as a shrill treble to the ceaseless chorus of multitudinous frogs, some of which are literally seven or eight inches in length, so it is no wonder that they produce a good deal of croaking! In colour they are of a rich olive, shading into brown on the back, and yellow on the under side. Even the pretty little green or yellowish tree-frogs add their sharp shrill cries to the concert.

This labyrinthine lagoon has a special interest in this Isle, which, strange to say, possesses no natural lakes. Those in the interior are all of artificial construction, and this is one of that very singular chain of lagoons (so apparent by a glance at the map) which lie parallel with the sea along so great a portion of Ceylon, both on the east and west coast —lagoons formed at the mouth of many rivers by their own deposit of sand, which thus chokes the original exit, and forces the stream to meander about in search of a new passage. Thus the beautiful Kelani river, which now enters the sea at Mutwal, fully three miles to the north, is believed to

have formerly done so here, and to have given its name to the city, which was originally known as Kalan-totta, "the Kalany Ferry." This name was changed by the Moors to Kalambu; and the Moorish traveller Ibn Batuta, who devoted twenty-eight years to visiting all sacred Mohammedan shrines, and who in A.D. 1347 came to Ceylon to do homage to Adam's Footprint, describes this as "the finest and largest city in Serendib." But when the Portuguese established themselves here in A.D. 1517, they further altered the name in honour of Columbus; hence its present form.

Happily the charming lake remains, with all its pleasant boating, and a fine carriage-road winds round each curve of its very irregular shore-line, forming a delightful drive. The "Galle Face" (the most delightful of esplanades) lies between its still waters on the one hand, and on the other, the thundering surf of the Indian Ocean. This, the "Routine Row" of Colombo, derives its name from being the first of the seventy miles of beautiful driving-road along the sea-coast to Galle. It is the only mile not embowered in trees, and is a strip of grass-land too much haunted by burrowing crabs to be absolutely safe riding-ground, but which nevertheless answers the purpose for the daily evening meeting (and even for the annual races, as we are reminded by a circular race-stand in the centre. For these, however, a better site is now proposed.) Carriages drive up and down a broad red road close to the great green waves.

The fashionable hour for this daily routine is from five to seven, and as Ceylon is so near the equator that the sun sets all the year round at about six o'clock, every one gets the full benefit of the ever-changing sunset glories, and magnificent they sometimes are, during the stormy monsoons. So brief is the twilight that often before seven it

is quite dark, and carriage-lamps must be lighted; but on the other hand, sometimes after a brief interval, an afterglow commences which lights up the sky with colours more beautiful than that of the sunset itself. The actual variation of sunrise and sunset ranges from about 5.45 A.M. in August to about 6.23 A.M. in February, and from 6.7 P.M. in August to 6.5 P.M. in February. Even at Galle, in the far south of the Isle, the difference between the longest and shortest days is only forty-one minutes.

Time is 5 hours, 19 minutes, 28 seconds ahead of Greenwich, so it is about noon in Colombo when England is only half awake.

Another thing worthy of note is the singularly slight variation in the tides, the rise and fall of which rarely exceed three feet.

An interesting peculiarity of the coasts of Ceylon is the frequency of water-spouts as forerunners of the monsoons. They rise from the shallow lagoons, or from the sea along the coast, taking the form of a rotatory inverted cone, with a dark umbrella-shaped top of fine spray. Several of these gently sportive water-whirlwinds are sometimes seen from the shore in the course of a day, but they never seem to do any damage.

Speaking of variable natural phenomena, I must just mention the weather, concerning which it seems to me impossible in Ceylon to speak of "dry" or "rainy" seasons as in India, for the rainfall varies so greatly in different districts, that when one part of the Isle is being parched, another is being saturated. Sometimes when we were in dry low-country districts, gasping for cool air, and all the farmers and villagers craving for rain, our friends in some of the coffee districts were being nearly drowned by the inces-

sant deluge pitilessly pouring on them day after day and week after week, threatening to wash all the soil from the rocky mountain-sides, and to float them and their crop right down to the sea.

Roughly, the south-west monsoon is supposed to commence at Colombo—*i.e.*, on the south-west coast—about the end of April; and the north-east monsoon (which sweeps the east coast and the north, right up to Jaffna) is due at the end of October. A small burst, called the "little monsoon," precedes the full down-pouring of the clouds.

It is during the north-east monsoon, which generally includes Christmas, that the pleasant but very treacherous land wind or "along-shore" wind, as it is called, prevails, bringing colds and fever and all manner of evils. Here most emphatically is "the wind from the east," bad alike for man and beast. Happily it is limited to the winter months; during the other nine, Colombo is greatly favoured with westerly sea-breezes.

Due consideration of these general laws will enable a traveller to avoid the heaviest rainfall on either coast; but as regards the mountain districts, one might as well calculate on weather in Scotland, for sometimes while one side of a dividing range is revelling in sunshine, the other is being deluged.

It is said that whereas the rainfall of Great Britain ranges from a minimum of 22 inches to a maximum of 70 inches, the minimum in Ceylon is 70, and the maximum exceeds 200 inches. But it all falls in from 100 to 200 days per annum, in the intervals of blazing sunshine.

Just beyond Galle Face lies Colpetty (or as it is now spelt, Kollupitiya), one of the most delightful suburbs of Colombo, but all around the grassy shores of the beautiful lake

(and indeed in every direction) are scattered the pleasant homes of the residents in this favoured isle.

The majority of these are all of the bungalow type—*i.e.*, only one storey high, built of stone or brick, and with the roof very high-pitched, both on account of the heat retained by the tiles and to throw off heavy rain. Thus much ventilation is secured, as inside, instead of a ceiling, there is only a tightly stretched white cloth; so the whole space within the roof is a reservoir for air—an attic wherein rats and rat-snakes dwell in anything but love, and often a great wobble and commotion overhead tells of a battle *à outrance*. But that canvas is the playground for many creatures, whose tiny feet you see running along. Thatch being prohibited in towns for fear of fire, the majority of these houses are roofed with round half-tiles, laid alternately so as to fit into one another and throw off rain.

Every house is surrounded by a wide verandah, supported by a row of white pillars which in the older bungalows resemble creamy-white marble. This beautiful polished surface was produced by a preparation of shell-lime called *chunam*, but I am told that the secret of making it has been lost. These cool verandahs, which generally extend right round the bungalow, are at once the main feature and chief luxury of oriental houses. Furnished with comfortable lounging-chairs and light tables, they become pleasant family sitting-rooms, with all the advantage of being out of doors, combined with the comfort of being in shadow and looking out to the bright sunlight through a veil of exquisite foliage and bright blossoms.

For the gardeners (or their masters) seem to vie one with another who shall raise the most fairy-like profusion of beautiful flowers. So roof and pillars are alike overgrown by

luxuriant creepers, while hanging baskets are filled with rare plants, and an endless variety of bright-leaved caladiums adorn the edge of the verandah. The flowering creepers are often trained to climb the neighbouring trees, which are thus festooned with lovely blossoms—blue, crimson, or gold.

The indigenous flame-coloured gloriosa, orange venusta, vanilla, orchids, begonia, white and yellow jessamine, roses, fuchsias, the vivid blue clitoria, and a tiny bright-blue convolvulus, strange pitcher-plants, gorgeous passion-flowers of all colours, and the delicate lavender blossoms of the Thunbergia, are among the most abundant beauties of these flower-embowered homes. Here and there a richer glow of rosy lilac reveals the gay foliage of the Bougainvillea, garlanding some sober tree with its bright wreaths of delicate leaves. In short, everything flourishes in this hot, moist atmosphere, and the mingled perfume of a thousand tropical blossoms is wafted on every breath of breezy sunshine.

Unfortunately we cannot quite forget that the warm moisture favours other growths less attractive, of which the most annoying is a delicate white fungus which rapidly covers all clothes, gloves, boots and shoes, papers and books, involving ceaseless watchfulness and exposure to the sun to save them from becoming hopelessly mildewed. In cases where it is possible to apply it, citronella oil is a useful remedy. Neglected scissors and knives turn to a mass of rust; and sometimes the mould fungus even gets into the very grain of the glass covering pictures, so that it is impossible to remove the opaque stains. As to drawing-paper, it becomes hopelessly mildewed as soon as it is landed; and the only possible corrective is to coat the paper with white paint ere commencing to colour—an unsatisfactory process, but better than revealing fungus-stars in every direction.

Then, too, the rough coir-matting on the verandahs, and the gravel which is generally laid close round bungalows, reminds us that their primary object is to keep off snakes, which dislike gliding over rough substances. Some very prudent people even object to overhanging trees, by which snakes may possibly climb so as to drop on to the house; but, as we have seen, the majority ignore this risk for the sake of a flower-embowered home. Still it does not do to forget that though Ceylon is Paradise, the serpent still asserts his presence and his power in the fairest gardens.

Then in house-building another serious foe has to be taken into account—namely, those stealthiest of aggressors, the white ants, properly called termites — little soft, white creatures about an inch long, which look quite incapable of doing mischief; and yet no Samson in the house of the Philistines could work more deadly harm than they when once they discover some secret means of access to the woodwork of a house. Carefully keeping out of sight, they work so diligently that in an incredibly short space of time what seems to be solid rafters will prove to be mere hollow shells full of powdered wood and cunningly cemented clay (where they obtain the clay and glue is as great a mystery as is the silk and web supplying power of silk-worms and spiders).

The wood of the palmyra palm and of the ebony-tree are the only Ceylonese timbers capable of resisting their ravages, and of course the demand for these is so much greater than the supply, that other wood—chiefly that of the jak-tree—is largely used in house-building, but necessitates constant watchfulness. For this reason wooden posts can never be sunk in the ground, but must rest on a stone foundation well in sight; and even then these clever engineers often

frustrate this precaution by constructing very unobtrusive tubular bridges of clay, through which they mount unseen, and so attack the woodwork at their leisure.

Fortunately the workers are all wingless; and though the perfect termites, both male and female, are each endowed with four wings, they happily do not take an unfair advantage of poor human beings by flying to new centres of destruction. Indeed the females, or rather the queens, have enough to do in recruiting the ant-legions, as each is supposed by the lowest computation to lay 3,000,000 eggs every year!

They seem to set very small value on their wings, which they shed on the smallest provocation. Sometimes in the evenings swarms of these winged ants, both white and black, fly in at the ever-open doors and windows, attracted by the lights; and after hovering about for a few moments, they vanish, leaving their wings behind them. I have seen scores of wings thus dropped on a dinner-table; and occasionally the bereft owners drop beside them, looking naked and humble.

Not only the woodwork of a house, but furniture and goods of all sorts, must be jealously guarded from the attacks of white ants; and any indication of clay in any crevice calls for immediate inspection. Legions of black and red ants of various sizes, some quite tiny, others half an inch in length, also involve constant watchfulness; for while the former would quickly make such havoc of a whole bookcase, or of a packing-case full of books, that little of them would be left except the backs exposed to view, the active little ants are always in search of something to devour, especially fruit, cakes, and sweetmeats of all sorts.

As a defensive measure, the legs of beds, tables, pianos, &c. are raised on glass stands, or set in jars full of water, while

empty black bottles laid in rows on the matting afford a tolerably secure foundation for packing-cases and luggage of all sorts.

Provided they can be kept from poaching, the black and red ants are invaluable scavengers, as they are for ever seeking what they may devour; and as there are upwards of seventy different species of ants in Ceylon, their collective efforts in this direction are not to be despised. Not only do they bodily carry off the corpses of any cockroaches, beetles, or tiny lizards which they happen to find about the house, but in the case of larger creatures, whose skeletons it may be desirable to preserve, such as snakes or small birds, it is enough to leave them secure from crows and such awkward dissectors,—the ants may safely be trusted to pick them faultlessly clean, and ready for exhibition in any museum. It is, however, needless to add, that if plumage is to be preserved, or butterflies, the ants, so far from being benefactors, are transformed into an army of myriad foes, from whom it will tax a collector's utmost ingenuity to defend his treasures.

But the red ants must be forgiven many indiscretions in consideration of the vigorous war which they wage against the altogether destructive white ants. Any one who likes can see this for himself by breaking open a corner of one of the innumerable white ants' castles which abound in the Cinnamon Gardens and elsewhere—ant-hills perhaps six feet high of most intricate internal construction, divided into separate compartments, and these into cells, all connected by passages, and all built of the finest clay, which the creatures can only obtain by excavating it from beneath the layer of white quartz sand which covers the ground to a depth of several inches.

By removing a corner of the roof, you not only may watch these busy masons hard at work, but the chances are that in a very few moments some wandering red ant will discover the breach in the enemy's fortress, and forthwith he will summon a whole regiment of small but most energetic red warriors, who will commence a furious onslaught on the hapless soft white masons, and then rapidly retire, carrying with them the corpses of the slain. So you see the red ants are man's useful allies. (In seasons of scarcity the ant-legions in the arid districts of Manaar are still more valuable as involuntary foragers. The Tamil villagers dig into their nests and rob them of all their store of divers seeds.)

The aforesaid Cinnamon Gardens form one of the most popular suburbs of Colombo, a considerable part having been sold by Government as building lots, and purchased by wealthy individuals, who have here built luxurious homes nestling in beautiful gardens. It has, however, the disadvantage of being somewhat remote from the sea, and so losing the freshness of the breeze, and being left a prey to armies of mosquitos. But it is a very favourite evening drive, the grounds being intersected by miles of good carriage-roads.

Of course the prevalence of one shrub implies monotony, and the multitudinous great ant-hills to which I have alluded are a fair indication of the general neglect which has suffered these once jealously guarded gardens to degenerate into a tangled jungle, rather suggestive of a neglected shrubbery of Portugal laurels, glorified by the natural growth of many flowering plants and a profusion of climbing vines, especially a large white convolvulus, which blooms only at night, and hence is commonly called "the moon-flower."

The red and yellow blossoms of the Lantana, the lilac Osbekia, a white flower like scentless jessamine, rose-coloured periwinkles, and quaint pitcher-plants, are among the many uncultivated plants; and there are also a number of large trees, which were originally planted for the sake of their shade.

The aromatic cinnamon laurel itself, when left to follow its natural will, grows to a height of about forty feet, but when under cultivation it is kept pruned to about fifteen feet. As is the case with many Ceylonese trees, its young foliage is scarlet, and gradually changes to a dark glossy green, so that in the distance you would fancy these young scarlet tips were blossoms. The latter are insignificant, of a dingy white, with pale yellow inside, and have rather an unpleasant smell. They flower in January, and by May have developed into small purplish-brown berries, each provided with a cup like that of the acorn.

These berries, when bruised and boiled with the young shoots, yield a fragrant oil, with which the wealthier natives anoint their hair, and, like all brown races, some follow their daily ablutions with a little polish of oil, just to make them of a cheerful countenance. This cinnamon oil is sometimes mixed with cocoa-nut oil, and burns with a most brilliant light. From this oil a thick white wax can be prepared, which used to be in great request for the manufacture of the tapers burnt in Buddhist temples, and also, under Portuguese rule, for making candles for the Roman Catholic altars. But so small is the amount of wax obtained from a very large quantity of berries, that the manufacture could never be a paying industry, and so it has fallen into disuse, and the crop of purple berries serves to fatten flocks of turtle and cinnamon doves, whose soft cooing is heard on every side.

Oil of camphor can be distilled from the roots of the cinnamon laurel. An oil is also extracted from the leaves, which is sold under the name of clove oil. The leaves when crushed in the hand have a certain aromatic fragrance like that of cloves, but as to "spicy breezes," there is no more smell of cinnamon here than in a hazel copse in Britain. That is not perceptible till you break a twig, or till the poor young shoots have been flayed and the inner bark is ready for export.

The cultivation is something like that of a willow copse, straight young shoots springing up round the stump of the plant previously cut. These in their turn are cut about every second year—that is to say, when they are about five feet high and about two inches in circumference. A good many of these are sold as walking-sticks, and find a ready market on board the steamers among the passengers, who think there must be a special charm in a cinnamon stick, though in truth it is hard to distinguish it from our own common hazel.

But of course the real thing to be secured is the highly aromatic inner bark. So first of all the leaves are stripped off, and then the bark is slit from end to end with a sharp knife, which has a curved point; with this, aided by fingers, the bark is carefully removed in long pieces. These are heaped up and left to sodden, so as to facilitate the next process—namely, that of scraping off the outer rind. In order to do this, each piece is placed on a round piece of wood and carefully scraped with the knife, the almost nude brown workers sitting on the ground and using their toes as an extra hand to steady the end of the stick. The bark is then left to dry in the sun, when it rolls itself up into tight quills. These are then neatly sorted and packed, three or

four inside of one another, and are made up into bales covered with cloth, and are then ready for export. Broken quills are either sold as chips or reserved for the distiller, who thence extracts oil of cinnamon, having first crushed and pounded the bark, and then soaked it in sea-water for a couple of days. The oil thus obtained is of a rich yellow or red colour.

Cinnamon is so singularly sensitive that great care has to be taken with regard to its surroundings on board ship, as a bale of very fine cinnamon will lose much of its delicate aroma if packed among bales of coarser bark. Various expedients have been tried to remedy this. The Portuguese and Dutch isolated the bales by packing them in cocoa-nut fibre, or in cattle-hides; but it is found that the only real safeguard is to pack bags of pepper between the bales.

Alas! in Ceylon as in some other countries, intending purchasers have need to guard against possible fraud in their investment, for it is said that certain native dealers have attained amazing skill in the substitution of other worthless barks, notably that of guava, which, after being duly prepared, is left for some hours to soak in the strongly scented water left after the distillation of cinnamon oil. This imparts the requisite sweet taste, and then a touch from a cloth dipped in cheap cinnamon oil completes the deception. Quills of either this prepared guava bark, or of coarse jungle cinnamon, are neatly packed inside good quills, and then only an adept can detect the fraud.

Strange indeed it is, looking at this jungle of neglected plants, with their glossy scarlet and green foliage, to think how enormous is the influence they have exerted on the fortunes of this Isle—an influence literally of life and death; for so resolute were the Dutch in maintaining their monopoly

of this precious spice, that in A.D. 1659 a law was enacted assigning death as the penalty of buying or selling the wild jungle cinnamon, which was the only sort then known.

A few years later the same penalty was attached to stealing the precious bark, to giving or receiving it, or to distilling camphor from the roots of the tree. The least injury to a cinnamon plant, wherever found, was punished by flogging, and when these Government Gardens had been established, the destruction of a plant in these involved certain death. But even supposing a cinnamon shrub to grow by chance on a man's private ground, Dutch law declared all such to be the property of the State; no one save the authorised peelers dared to touch it under severe penalties, and if the proprietor, anxious to keep his land to himself, and safe from State trespassers, dared to cut it down, he was liable to capital punishment!

It is difficult to understand how such laws could have been possible, seeing that wild cinnamon grew so abundantly throughout the south-western provinces, and in the Kandyan forests, and even on the east coast near Batticaloa, that there seems every reason to believe it to have been indigenous. The same inference is drawn from finding it described in an ancient Sanskrit catalogue of plants as Singhalem, or "belonging to Ceylon."

On the other hand, it is certainly singular, if this was the case, that in enumerating the precious products of Ceylon in medieval ages, when cinnamon was so greatly prized, it is never once mentioned by any writer prior to Nicola de Conti, who in A.D. 1444 speaks of it as growing here. This certainly seems to give reason to the argument of those who maintain that it was imported from Africa—probably from Cape Guardafui—to the south-western districts, where (like the Lantana in our

own days) it rapidly became acclimatised, its seeds being carried by birds to more remote inland districts. Hence perhaps the reason for the Dutch law against shooting crows.

Certain it is that when the Portuguese arrived here in the middle of the fifteenth century, cinnamon was the one object desired, and the selection of Colombo with only an open roadstead, to be the headquarters of trade, in preference to Trincomalee with its magnificent natural harbour, could only have been due to the fact of its being the natural centre of the cinnamon region, and near to Cotta, the residence of the Singhalese king, by whose favour alone could the precious bark be obtained.

Finding that cinnamon was the one item desired by those foreign traders, the king required the low-caste Chaliyas, who were weavers, to pay him a heavy tribute in prepared bark; so (at the proper peeling season, in May, after the rains have softened the bark) they had to leave their looms and enter the forests in search for cinnamon—no sinecure in those days, when wild beasts abounded, and when no less savage Kandyans were on the alert to harass their low-country neighbours, sometimes cutting down the cinnamon trees in order to annoy the foreigners.

The Kandyan king himself, however, was open to trade, and in exchange for salt and Indian cloths, sent large consignments of mountain cinnamon, much of which was too acrid for exportation. The Portuguese seem to have sent out military escorts from their various forts to guard the Chaliyas in their arduous work of collecting the *Maha badda* or great tax; and the *Capitan de Canella*, or chief of the cinnamon-peelers, was treated both by the Portuguese and afterwards by the Dutch with much honour.

Nevertheless these Chaliyas cannot have had a very happy

time of it, judging from the law enacted forbidding them to make any complaints to the governor, except through the superintendent of the cinnamon plantations, on pain of being put in chains for three years. We may infer that complaints were not frequent, and that the art of "grinning and bearing" was brought to great perfection.

Under the Portuguese rule, the collecting thereof seems to have gone on fairly enough. Though their barbarous cruelties in war were almost beyond belief, it was reserved for the Dutch to make such laws as I have just quoted, in order to secure a monopoly in trade. Amongst these was the enactment of a fine of a thousand guilders for each plant of cinnamon or any other spice exported from the Isle to India or Europe. This was evaded by the Dutch themselves, who surreptitiously exported seeds, and it is said plants also, to Java, and there established flourishing plantations.

But from the end of the fifteenth century till the middle of the nineteenth, the cinnamon of Ceylon stood unrivalled, and the Isle supplied almost all the spice used in Europe. Its price was kept up both by the Portuguese and Dutch, by occasional bonfires of surplus stock, so that there might be no glut in the market, such as has in modern days of free trade caused such fluctuations in its price. In the days of the monopoly, when the export was restricted to 8000 bales of 100 lb. each, the price in the European market for cinnamon of the finest quality was twelve shillings per pound; and between A.D. 1753 and 1787 the price rose to seventeen shillings and eightpence. Now, when about 12,000 bales are annually shipped, one shilling per pound is the highest price that can be obtained for the best bark.

In the first place, the high price of cinnamon led to the extensive use of cassia, which is largely exported from China

and India, and which, though coarser and more pungent, strongly resembles cinnamon. Then when Java, Tillicherry, Madras, Guiana, Martinique, and Mauritius all succeeded in growing cinnamon, the market was flooded with such coarse bark, selling at such low prices, that cassia was in its turn almost driven from the field. It still, however, holds its ground in the manufacture of chocolate for Russia and Turkey, Mexico and Germany, where its pungent flavour is preferred to the more delicate cinnamon. But in the manufacture of incense for Greek and Roman Catholic churches and heathen temples, for medicinal purposes and domestic use, and also in the preparation of "Thorley's Food for Cattle," cinnamon is largely used.

To return to the "Cinnamon Gardens," whence I started on this long digression: these and similar plantations were started by the Dutch only in the last century, in order to be independent of the supplies collected in the jungles in the interior of the Isle. They were established all along the south-west coast, wherever there was a fort to protect them, beginning at Matara and Galle in the south, and extending as far north as Negombo and Chilaw. Some were on a very large scale, this one at Colombo (Marandhan) covering 3824 acres, while that at Negombo covered 5137 acres.

They seem to have been simply tracts of the great jungle in which wild cinnamon grew in dense profusion, more especially between Negombo and Chilaw. Apparently the work of the Dutch State gardeners was simply to clear the land of other jungle shrubs, fill up the vacancies with cinnamon seedlings, and drain the ground. Nature supplied the moist heat which is the first essential of cinnamon culture, and the shrub grows well even on poor soil. Nevertheless, it responds generously to more hospitable treatment, and it is

said that when portions of the Cinnamon Gardens were purchased by private individuals, some who fed their land with rich manure reaped a sevenfold harvest—in other words, they gathered 350 lb. of bark to the acre, on land which had previously yielded 50 lb.

The natural soil of these gardens is very peculiar. The whole surface is of the very finest snow-white quartz sand; this, however, is only a layer a few inches deep, covering a grey sand, beneath which lies a stratum almost entirely composed of sea-shells, so that the roots of the trees do strike nourishing soil. Such is the longevity of the cinnamon laurel that many of the trees, which must be fully a hundred years old, are still in full vigour.

When the British obtained possession of Ceylon, Government of course succeeded to the monopoly, which was retained till 1832, when it was abandoned, and the trade in cinnamon thrown open to all merchants on payment of an export duty of three shillings a pound. The Government Cinnamon Department, however, retained its staff of highly paid English officials and numerous native officials, together with hundreds of peelers, sorters, &c., till 1840, when, on the representation of the merchants of the impossibility of their trading against such competition, the Government connection with the trade was altogether severed, and the export duty lowered to one shilling per pound. Five years later this final tax was also removed, but by this time the substitution of cassia and coarser cinnamon from other places had so lowered the market that it has never since recovered.

So the Government Gardens were sold at very low prices to private individuals, and these at Colombo were reserved to be disposed of in building lots, as purchasers could be found. A plot has recently been assigned to the Parsees for the

erection of a "Tower of Silence" for the disposal of their dead.

Speaking of the cinnamon laurel and of the rigorous Dutch laws concerning it, reminds me of another very attractive member of the laurel family—namely, the spicy nutmeg-tree (*Myristica fragrans*). As the Dutch resolved that Ceylon should monopolise the trade of the whole world in cinnamon and pepper, so they assigned to the Moluccas the exclusive right to grow nutmeg and cloves. Quite pathetic stories are told of the manner in which certain tender young trees which found their way into gardens in Ceylon were ruthlessly cut, and their owners haled to prison.

Happily under English rule the nutmeg-tree has fared better, having been formally introduced by Mr Anstruther in 1838, so now it flourishes without fear, and its fruit is perhaps the prettiest that grows. At first sight it resembles a round golden-yellow pear, hanging beneath its glossy green leaves, but when fully ripe, this golden fruit divides and reveals a ball of yellowish-scarlet mace closely wrapped round a thin shining brown shell, within which lies the familiar nutmeg. The yellow outer flesh makes an excellent preserve. A favourite colonial story tells of an imperative order from Britain to grow more mace and fewer nutmegs!

CHAPTER III.

COLOMBO.

The oldest newspaper editor in the East — Turtles and tortoises — Ceylon timber for cabinetmaking — Bridge of boats — Kelani Temple—Buddhist priests of two sects—Sacred fire—The Buddhist revival—Kotahena Temple—Riot—Cremation of a priest.

Amongst the pleasant memories of many friends whose kindness helped to brighten each day in the fair isle, I cannot refrain from naming one family, so numerous, and all so intimately associated with Ceylon, that, under various names, they seemed to be ubiquitous. I allude to that of Sir Charles Peter Layard, who (happily still surviving) was the eldest of a family of twenty-three brothers and sisters, most of whom married and settled in the Isle, as have also many of their children.

Another name closely associated with Ceylon for the last fifty years has been that of Mr A. M. Ferguson, who for forty-four years has ably edited the leading newspaper of the colony, the 'Ceylon Observer,' and whose knowledge on all subjects connected with the Isle causes him to be regarded as a sort of Ceylonese Encyclopedia. Happily much of this knowledge is imparted to the public in a copious

Handbook and Directory, and in other publications of special interest to the large planting community.

His brother, Mr William Ferguson, a distinguished botanist, and a keen lover of natural history in all its branches, was one of my first friends at Colombo, and vividly do I remember my first reception in his pretty bungalow. He had sent messengers in every direction to search for specimens of the most beautiful and interesting flowers, indigenous and exotic, scarlet, white, gold, and purple, and with these his verandah was adorned, that he might give me a delightfully illustrated botanical lecture, made quite realistic by the presence of a great variety of live turtles and tortoises, at least a score of these, some not much bigger than a penny, creeping all over the place. I confess to some qualms at the activity of a lively cobra with distended hood! Then Mr Ferguson showed us samples of all the reptiles of the Isle preserved in spirits, so that I came away very much enlightened as to what I was to look out for, in my further travels.[1] He also gave me the following summary of Ceylonese reptiles:—

"Thirty-eight frogs of all sorts, and one apiesiium.

"Seventy-nine snakes of all sorts, including twenty-three sea-snakes, supposed to be found on our coasts, all of which are said to be deadly. Of the others only three are deadly, and four more are poisonous.

[1] Ceylon is truly a happy hunting-ground for collectors. Thus in March 1889 a German naturalist, Herr Frühstorfer, landed here. He enlisted fourteen collectors to work for him all over the Isle, and in July he departed taking with him a collection of upwards of 25,000 beetles, 7000 butterflies, 3000 orthoptera (*i.e.*, "straight-winged," which includes mantis, leaf-insects, spectre-insects, walking-sticks, grasshoppers, crickets, locusts, &c.), 3000 dragon-flies, 1000 spiders and centipedes, and all manner of land and sea snakes; also a fine collection of shells.

"Forty-five of the family of crocodiles, including lizards, geckoes, blood-suckers, and one chameleon.

"Eight tortoises, and fresh and salt-water turtles."

Some of the land tortoises are tiny little brown things, but others are very pretty, perhaps from four to eight inches in length, with convex shell beautifully marked. I have one, of which the scales resemble limpets, each striped with bright yellow rays on a rich brown or black ground. Another has flat pentagonal scales like shields, each with bright yellow centre set in brown and black. These retain all their beautiful natural polish. They are generally found in or near ponds.

The Tamil fishers describe turtles as *kaddal amai* or "sea-turtles," while tortoises are called "milk-turtles" and "pariah-turtles." The latter are found in marshes and ditches, and though not edible, are highly valued by the natives on account of certain medicinal properties, supposed to belong to them, their flesh and blood being deemed an antidote for infantile sickness! The "milk-turtle" (*pal amai*), or terrapin, live in tanks and wells, and are said to be useful as scavengers, devouring insects and their larvæ.

Of "sea-turtle" there are several varieties, of which the principal are the edible turtle and the hawk's-bill. The former are found on all parts of the coast, and are specially abundant in the north of the Isle. On the small twin isles of Iranativu near Jaffna they are so numerous as to form the chief food of the people, to say nothing of furniture, the shells being used as seats. At certain seasons, however, they are so unwholesome as to be accounted poisonous; in fact, in various instances deaths have been attributed to feasting on turtle out of season. Large quantities of their soft round white eggs are also eaten, the mother turtle confidingly de-

positing from one to two hundred in the warm sun, in the very presence of hungry men! These creatures are sometimes captured of a very large size, four or five feet in length, and their shells are utilised in various ways.

But the turtle which yields the beautiful tortoise-shell of commerce is the hawk's-bill, which is not considered wholesome, and a very barbarous method used to be practised by the natives in order to secure several sets of scales from the same creature. It was captured and suspended over a wood fire till the heat made the scales drop off, after which it was allowed to crawl away scorched and bereft of its coveted shell.

I speak of this in the past tense, because the police are now ever on the alert to prevent all manner of cruelty to animals, so that such barbarities as this, and also cutting up live turtles and selling them bit by bit, are at least less common than of old. The reason assigned in this case is that the shell loses its natural gloss and becomes opaque if the poor turtle has been allowed to die. In some other isles, however—*e.g.*, the Celebes—the turtles are first knocked on the head, and then dipped in boiling water, by which means the outer shell is detached in better condition than by the barbarous smoking process.

The names turtle and tortoise are used so promiscuously that I was glad to learn a simple distinction between them—namely, that turtles which live chiefly in the sea are furnished with fin-like flappers, whereas land tortoises have neat little feet with claws. The terrapin, or marsh tortoises, have webbed feet and claws, so that they are provided for all contingencies.

It has been said that a placid temperament tends to longevity, and certainly these creatures happily illustrate the

theory. We know that even in so cold a climate as that of Britain tortoises have lived to a very great age. There is preserved at Peterborough Cathedral the shell of one which was known to have been upwards of one hundred and eighty years old, when it was killed by an accident. And at Lambeth may still be seen the shell of one which Archbishop Laud brought there from Fulham, and which is known to have lived there for one hundred and thirty years, during which time no less than eight archbishops ruled over Canterbury. There is no saying how many more it might have survived had it not been for the carelessness of a gardener who dug it out of its hole one cold winter day and neglected to provide it with another, and the poor thing being too drowsy to find one for itself, died of cold.

That, at least, is a danger from which no tortoise is likely to suffer in Ceylon (unless he takes to mountain-climbing); consequently I believe they do not hibernate here, but live in consciousness all the year round. One of the regular sights at Colombo is a noble old tortoise of unknown age, but which is believed to have been a native of the Galapagos Isles, and supposed to have been about fifty years of age when it was sent from Singapore as an offering to one of the Dutch governors of Colombo Fort, upwards of a hundred and fifty years ago.

From that time to the present it has been a pet of the foreign residents, having been "taken over" from the Dutch and left in possession of the garden at Tangue Salgado (now known as Uplands). Here early colonists used to amuse themselves by tortoise-riding, seven or eight men standing at once on his strong back, while he slowly but steadily walked off with his heavy burden. But now, alas! he is quite blind, and moves very slowly, only seeming to find

some pleasure while grazing in the cool moist grass near the well.

The Japanese have adopted a mythological variety of this family as an emblem of longevity, and not without good reason. Even as I write, the daily papers report the capture on the St John river, Florida, of a tortoise bearing the arms of Spain, and the date 1700 plainly discernible on its dorsal shell, as also the following inscription (doubtless in Spanish): "Captured in the year 1700 by Fernando Gomez in the St Sebastian river: taken later on by the Indians to Montanzas, and from there to the Great Wekima." The latter was the ancient name of the river now known as the St John. After showing this elderly tortoise to several friends, the captor added the date 1890 and released it, perhaps to enjoy another century of placid existence.

A specially interesting visit in Colombo was to Alfred House, the home of Mr Charles de Soysa, said to be the wealthiest native of Ceylon, and certainly the most eminently philanthropic, his influence and his wealth having always been at the service of every wise scheme for the help and improvement of the people.

A maternity hospital, a model farm, and an admirably conducted college at Moratuwa, are among the public benefactions by which he will be best remembered, and widespread and real was the grief of many thousands who attended his funeral, when in the autumn of 1890 this true friend of rich and poor died of hydrophobia. Sad to say, he was bitten by a mad terrier on August 2d, and died on the 29th September, happily without great pain. His European friends vainly pleaded that he should at once start for Paris to place himself under the care of M. Pasteur, but he resolved to retire to Moratuwa, and there abide by the treat-

ment of the Singhalese *wedaralas,* which unhappily proved ineffectual.

Specially interesting to a new-comer in the Isle were the beautiful specimens of furniture at Alfred House, much of it richly carved, made from all the choicest woods of the Ceylonese forests—forests which, alas! have hitherto been so ruthlessly destroyed by natives and foreigners that many of the most valuable trees, once so abundant, are now exceedingly rare.

Doubtless many persons still remember the very valuable furniture which was lent by M. de Soysa to the Indian and Colonial Exhibition in 1886. That was a fair sample of the home treasures of which he was so justly proud. Of all the Ceylonese woods, I think the handsomest is the Calamander, with its rich brown and yellow markings. Unfortunately its beauty has almost resulted in its extermination, the forests where once it grew having now been entirely cleared of every tree worth cutting.

The Pulu and the Kumbuk are both very pretty rich brown woods; the Katu-puli has a mahogany-coloured centre, with a straw-coloured edge; the Makulai has also a rich mahogany centre; the Maruta is amber-tinted at the heart, with a pale outer circle; and the tamarind is of a rich chocolate colour, with a yellow edge, its root being specially prized. The tamarind is, however, so very hard as to be extremely difficult to work.

These are but a few from among many of the choicest specimens, as you can well understand, seeing that the Ceylonese forests yield about ninety different useful timbers. One of the most beautiful is the pale-yellow satin-wood, which fifty years ago was so abundant in the north-eastern forests that it was commonly used for house-building, and

even for making bridges, notably that beautiful bridge which spans the Maha-velli-ganga at Peradeniya, near Kandy. One rare and precious variety is known as flowered satin-wood, and is very highly valued.

Perhaps the most singular of all ornamental woods is the ebony, of which there are two kinds, distinguished by the natives as Kalu-wara and Karun-kali, both having the same peculiar characteristic of a jet-black heart set in a pale outer edge: some one has aptly described it as a white tree with black marrow. Akin to the true ebony is the Kadumberia, with tiger-like markings of brown and yellow merging in the black centre. Its roots yield most beautiful fantastic waving patterns of black or fawn colour.

Several of the palm-trees—notably the palmyra and cocoa—are also of exceedingly beautiful grain and colour, and when denuded of their bark and polished, they form very handsome pillars.

A good deal of timber from the eastern forests is floated down the rivers to the sea, and there formed into rafts, and so conveyed to its destination. A very few days after I arrived at St Thomas's College a large raft of ebony arrived from Trincomalee, and was landed on the sands just below the College while I was sketching on the shore. One tree at a time was detached; and ten or twelve brown coolies, whose raiment consisted chiefly of a turban, waded or swam to the raft with a bamboo and cords, by which they attached the tree, and so floated it ashore and carried it up the bank.

One of our earliest expeditions was to visit an ancient Buddhist temple on the farther bank of the Kelani river, which we crossed by a bridge of boats. That in itself was interesting. It seemed so strange to see such an array of boats anchored side by side right across the wide stream,

placed to act as piers in supporting the roadway, across which a ceaseless traffic of heavily laden creaking bullock-carts was passing to and fro. It is a curious survival of what is now ancient history—namely, Ceylon as it was in 1830, without roads or bridges, and when this military bridge of boats, constructed by Sir Edward Barnes, was an unspeakable boon to brown men and white.

Now, however, in these days of rapid progress, when first-class iron girders span the most distant and out-of-the-way rivers with the minimum of traffic, this cumbersome old-fashioned approach to the capital is felt to be out of keeping with the times. While the stoppage of all land traffic for one hour daily, to allow boats to pass up and down the river, is felt to be a grievous inconvenience to carts, carriages, and pedestrians, the luckless boat-owners murmur, with graver cause, at a detention of perhaps twenty-three hours ere they can be allowed to pass.

Moreover, in the summer floods, which almost annually cause serious damage to the low lands near the mouth of the river, this bridge is frequently not only closed to traffic, but its very existence is endangered by the sweeping down of floating trees and timber-rafts, and accidents are imminent. So this interesting relic is doomed, and is to be replaced by a fine iron bridge of eight spans, four of 100 feet and four of 30 feet.

The river derives its name from a very ancient city which once stood on its banks, and of which this temple is a descendant, inasmuch as it was built in the year A.D. 1240, and rebuilt about A.D. 1301, on the site of one which dated from about 500 B.C.

Within the temple a great image of Buddha sits beneath the Naga canopy (*i.e.*, overshadowed by the great hooded

cobra), and in most happy companionship with images of Ganesha, Vishnu, and Siva, the latter grasping his trident. Those who are interested in ritualistic eccentricities will note that Siva's hand is uplifted in the orthodox attitude of blessing, with the first and second fingers raised, and the third and fourth closed.

To the student of theoretic Buddhism, which inculcates no worship of any sort (least of all the worship of Buddha himself), and which dispenses with all supernatural aid, this amalgamation of creeds is startling, but in Ceylon, as in Siam, it is quite a matter of course; indeed, even in China and Japan, the Hindoo gods find room in many a Buddhist temple, practical Buddhism being simply the addition of the founder's own image, and those of his many disciples and saints, to those of the multitudinous idols whom he strove to extirpate.

That this very debased form of Buddhism is so prevalent in Ceylon is due to the fact that the priesthood imported from Siam by the ancient kings incorporated all manner of Hindoo superstitions and caste prejudices, refusing to admit men of low caste to the higher orders of the priesthood, while permitting all to combine with their priestly duties such occupations as astrology, the practice of medicine, &c.

A very much purer form of Buddhism is, however, held by the priests of the Amarapoora sect, now largely on the increase. These derive their ecclesiastical orders from Burmah, and disclaim all connection with the polytheism of India, rigidly excluding from their temples every image or symbol of Hindoo worship. They are readily distinguished from the Siamese priesthood by the fact of wearing their long yellow robe folded round the body so as to cover both shoulders, whereas the Siamese always have one end falling

over the left shoulder, while the right arm and neck are always bare. All agree in the necessity of shaving the head, but the controversy as to whether shaving the eyebrows is incumbent has been as hot as the tonsure question in the Christian Church.

Curiously enough, of all the multitudinous images of Buddha which I saw in Ceylon, I cannot recall one which has not the right shoulder uncovered, so the inference is that all must have been sculptured or built under the influence of men of the Siamese sect.

These reserve certain portions of the sacred books for the exclusive use of the priests of the highest grade. The Burmese priests, on the contrary, expound the whole of the sacred books to all the people; they totally ignore caste, but insist on the priests abstaining from all secular work.

The origin of these sects forms a noteworthy feature in the history of Ceylon. It seems that for several centuries Buddhism had been degenerating, and departing further and further from its original purity. At length, owing to the prolonged civil wars which desolated the Isle towards the close of the seventeenth century, the *Upasampada*, or highest order of priests, had almost ceased to exist; and as they alone were competent to ordain the *Samanaros*, or priests of lower grade, there seemed every probability that Buddhism would simply evaporate from Ceylon.

At this juncture the Jesuit missionaries very naturally endeavoured to secure a firmer footing, but the Dutch therein scenting the political influences of Portugal, determined to counteract their action. They therefore gave every assistance to the Buddhists by lending them ships to convey a special mission to Arracan, whence a number of fully qualified priests were imported to reanimate their brethren, and

effectually oppose the efforts of the Roman Catholic missionaries.

About eighty years later, however, it again became necessary to import priests of the highest order, and this time the King of Kandy sent an embassy to Siam, there to claim this ecclesiastical aid. The Siamese priests, however, so far from restoring Buddhism to its purity, sanctioned all the corruptions which had crept in, and especially refused to admit men of low birth to the higher offices of the priesthood.

This exclusiveness induced the low-caste priests to organise an expedition to Burmah, the very centre of orthodox Buddhism, there to claim the ordination which was denied them in Ceylon. They were received with open arms, not only by the Burmese high priest (who had been greatly troubled on account of the degeneracy of the faith in Ceylon), but also by the king himself, who caused their ordination to be celebrated with regal honours. They were seated on golden howdahs, borne by stately elephants; two golden umbrellas of state were held over each of the candidates, who were escorted first to the royal palace, and thence to the hall of ordination, by a procession of thousands of officials of every grade, together with a vast crowd of people.

On their return to Ceylon in 1802 these priests became the founders of the aforesaid Amarapoora sect, between which and their brethren in Siamese orders there exists a great gulf, each assuming the other to be swamped in fatal error.

Although the title of "priest" is used for convenience, the position of these men is curiously anomalous. Sir Monier Williams says they should rightly all be called "monks." That this is so, is evident from the 'Buddhist Catechism,' by Colonel Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, in which it is stated, "Buddhist priests do not acknowledge or

expect anything from a Divine Power, but they *ought* to govern their lives according to the doctrine of Buddha. Buddhists regard a personal God as only a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men. . . . We do not believe in miracle, hence we deny creation, and cannot conceive of a Creator."

Where, then, is the necessity for priestly ministers?

As regards the worshippers, the chief mode of accumulating merit in every Buddhist country is the ceaseless reiteration of Buddha's name. In China, *O-mi-to-fu* is the charm; in Thibet, *O-mani-padhi-hum*,—it is all the same thing. The sovereign balm for every woe is to repeat the name of Buddha, and when you have done this ten thousand times ten thousand, begin again. Buddhism has nothing better for any wounded spirit.

The walls of the Kelani temple are covered with painting, representing divers legends. Before all the altars are heaped offerings of fragrant, but, alas! fading flowers and delicate ferns, jessamine, roses, lovely lotus-blossoms, scarlet hibiscus, the large yellow bells of the allamanda, sweet yellow champac, and, most delicious of all, the curly cream-coloured blossoms of the temple flower[1] or awaria. The latter is a curiously thick-set stumpy tree, bearing clusters of long narrow leaves and blossoms on very stout branches, from which a milky-white juice oozes when you gather a flower. It is really a South American tree, and is supposed to have been brought thence to the Philippine Isles in the beginning of the sixteenth century. (Magellan made the first direct voyage in A.D. 1520, and many plants from the New World were very soon brought thither, and thence made their way to farther points.)

[1] *Plumeria acutifolia.*

These trees are almost invariably grown near the temples, for the sake of the enchantingly fragrant perfume of the blossoms, each of which is like a cluster of five pure creamy shells with yellow heart. Within the temples the scent before evening becomes oppressive, especially as the floral offerings include many marigolds, whose orthodox yellow colour outweighs their unpleasant smell.

The most attractive offerings are the plume-like blossoms of the areca and cocoa palms, both of which seem as though they were carved in purest ivory. Many of these are offered for sale in shops[1] in the bazaar, that worshippers who have not brought their gift with them may not enter the temple empty-handed. In the outer court is a very sacred Bo-tree

[1] One is loath to think of dishonesty and violence as possible in connection with such offerings. But the following paragraph from the 'Ceylon Observer,' April 12, 1891, exemplifies a curious phase of fraud :—

"*Scene at a Buddhist Temple.*—Last evening there was a gathering of people at the Buddhist temple at Kotahena; and the proceedings of the evening terminated by one of the Buddhist priests being assaulted and robbed. As is the custom on such occasions, a number of flower-sellers assembled outside the temple premises and put up stalls on the roadside for the sale of flowers, water-lilies included. These are purchased by the motley crowd who assemble at the temple, and offered at the shrine of their god.

"*It appears that some persons, after presenting their offerings, took the flowers back to the stalls and resold them.* The Buddhist priests, incensed at the deceit practised, and the indignity offered to their leader, took immediate steps to denounce the practice by beat of tomtom, and to warn the assembled multitude that a repetition of such conduct would not be tolerated.

"Shortly afterwards a bully of the Kotahena district, Swaris by name, who is also one of those 'ill-omened birds of prey' who infest the courts, with five others of his kin, rushed into the temple premises and gave Janananda Unnanse a good beating, finally stabbing the yellow-robed gentleman with a knife in his right arm. The culprits walked away, but before doing so helped themselves to the poor priest's yellow robes, two in number, some other clothing, and a large sum of money.

"The Unnanse charged the offenders this morning before the police court."

A curious illustration of the spirit of meanness in regard to offerings is the common saying with regard to any beautiful flowers growing hopelessly out of reach, "I offer it to Buddha!"

(*Ficus religiosa*), an offshoot from that at Anaradhapura, as indeed every Bo-tree in the Isle is supposed to be. This tree receives its full share of floral offerings, as do also various hideous idols beneath its shadow.

Outside the temple there are great lamps wherein sacred fire burns all the year round. This is extinguished on April 13th, and is renewed by striking fire from stones. The sacred fire thus obtained is locked up in a great cage-like lamp, supported by a brass peacock, and is fed by the drip of cocoa-nut oil led in from an external reservoir.

I also noted with interest a lamp-stand or chandelier, like a tree, with lotus-blossoms to act as lamps. This is rotatory, and very like one in the Court of the "Beautiful Temple" at Nikko in Japan. One of the kindly yellow-robed priests could talk English, and as I had so recently seen the rotatory prayer-wheels on the borders of Thibet, I asked him whether any such existed in Ceylon. He informed me that there either is or was one, in a temple in that neighbourhood. I never, however, saw a trace of anything of the sort in Ceylon.[1]

Near the temple is the preaching-house, where the faithful assemble to hear sermons. As we wandered about we were escorted by a number of gentle Singhalese; pretty small children offered us flowers, and some of the smallest toddled beside us, grasping our dresses in the most confiding manner.

Till quite recently this was the only Buddhist temple of any importance near Colombo, the Dutch having brought the "persuasive eloquence of the cannon" to bear on all

[1] I have described all the varieties of Buddhist so-called wheels, or rather revolving cylinders, containing prayers, images, or books, in 'In the Himalayas,' page 424 to 441—published by Chatto & Windus; also in 'Wanderings in China,' vol. ii. pages 195 and 331—published by W. Blackwood & Sons.

heathen temples within range of their forts. During their reign, worship was prohibited here also, and the priests were banished from the temple. Of course, from the moment the Union-jack was hoisted, perfect liberty of conscience was secured to all creeds. Within the last fifteen years, however, under the fostering care of the British Government, the Buddhist priests have been reinstated in greater power and honour than for many past centuries, insomuch that many of the Singhalese believe, with some apparent reason, that England's Queen must be at heart a Buddhist.

To average Christians who believe it to be a matter earnestly to be desired, that all false faiths should fade away before the One True Light of the world, it is a cause of very deep regret that (whereas till quite recently, the condition of Buddhism in Ceylon was such, and the contempt of the people for the majority of its priests was so strong, that there seemed every probability of its soon becoming a dead letter) it has within the last few years received so large a measure of State patronage—unprecedented since the days of the Buddhist kings—as has electrified it into a state of renewed and aggressive vigour.

One very difficult question concerns the part to be taken by the State in regard to what are described as Buddhist temporalities. Whereas in 1881 the British Government marked its perfect neutrality in matters of creed by disestablishing the Episcopal (previously the State) Church of Ceylon, in 1889 it ordered the election of committees of Buddhist laymen to take strict supervision of the enormous revenues of the Buddhist temples, not in order to secure their expenditure on philanthropic work and on Government schools, but solely to check their appropriation by priests for their personal use, and to ensure their application to the

definitely religious service of these temples, and to pansala schools directly in connection therewith. It had been proved that in the well-endowed districts, especially those around Kandy, where Buddhism is wealthiest, the priests scarcely kept up any pretence of teaching the people, even by the wretched education in pansala schools; and that the temple revenues were in many cases appropriated for the vilest purposes.

(In the Fijian Isles, where it is little more than fifty years since the first Christian missionary landed in a group peopled with ferocious cannibals, it would now be hard to find one man, woman, or child who cannot read and write. In Ceylon in 1890 it was found that 23 per cent of the men and 79 per cent of the women throughout the Isle could not write their own name, and in Kandy only 4 per cent of the women can sign their own name in their marriage register. So much for the pansala schools!)

When the passing of this Buddhist Temporalities Bill was under discussion, the Buddhist priests sent a strong protest to show the impossibility of their submitting the management of their temple funds to laymen, "*who by the laws of Buddhism were bound to worship the priests.*" Nevertheless, the ordinance was passed, and lay trustees appointed, whereupon many of the priests hastened to "realise" as much temple property as possible for their own behoof. Amongst other things, the police captured a man laden with a sackful of gold and silver images of Buddha, and other temple treasures. The case was tried, and the priest, who had sent these goods to be sold for his private benefit, maintained that he was fully entitled to do so! Such being the priests' views of the temple property committed to their trust, it follows that all efforts of the lay

authorities to carry out their instructions have been vigorously opposed by the priests, resulting in a general chaos, from which, it is urged, nothing can rescue them save the actual management by Government of temple funds; in other words, the re-establishing of a distinctly official relation with Buddhism. This is exactly what the Buddhists want, and it would be recognition on no small scale; for although Ceylon no longer boasts, as in days of old, of supporting 60,000 Buddhist priests, it is a notable fact that between one-third and one-fourth of the cultivated land of the island is the property of the Buddhist monasteries, and as such is exempt from the taxation which applies to all rice-growing lands.

The whole history of Buddhism in Ceylon is that of a system upheld by the strong will of the rulers by whom in various ages these enormous gifts of land were made (subject to certain conditions regarding their occupation) to the Buddhist Vihares and Hindoo Dewales, which, while theoretically antagonistic, are in fact inextricably blended. These gifts included the serfdom in perpetuity of all the many thousands of inhabitants, who in each succeeding age were born to the most absolute slavery of compulsory work for the service of the temples, and who were bought and sold with the land, should the temple authorities see fit to sell portions of their estates.

Against this yoke of bondage the serfs have vainly striven, and but for the continued support of the rulers, the priests would all along have been totally unable to exact the oppressive and often detested service. Unfortunately, under an entire misapprehension of the true relation of priests and people, the earlier British governors deemed it politic (as a supposed means of securing a strong influence with the

people) to extend official support to Buddhism as "the national creed."

This mistaken policy was sealed when, after the capture of the last king of Kandy in 1815, a Convention was signed with the Kandyan chiefs, whereby Sir Robert Brownrigg, as Britain's representative, undertook that she should maintain and protect the rites and places of worship of the Buddhist religion—an iniquitous compact with idolatry, which surely ought to have been at once repudiated by a Christian nation.

Sir Robert himself interpreted this clause as merely promising the Buddhists security from molestation in the exercise of their religion; but the terms of this treaty have proved a source of grave perplexity to successive governors, who have found themselves politically bound to do honour to a creed dishonouring to that which they themselves hold to be the only truth.

Moreover, though it had been abundantly proved how small the influence of the priests really was, apart from Government support, nevertheless, by the action of the British Government in recognising these temple rights, an immense multitude of British subjects continued to be held in fetters which bound them body and soul alike, liberty of conscience being for them a mere fiction.

This state of virtual slavery continued in full force, till, on its iniquity being fully recognised by Sir Hercules Robinson, a Service Tenures Ordinance was passed in 1870, by which serfs were empowered to free themselves from compulsory labour by commutation—*i.e.*, by paying an equivalent in coin, so that their position might become that of voluntary tenants, paying rent in service or in money.

This decision, theoretically so satisfactory, does not seem

to have remedied the evil, for in the Administration Report for the Province of Sabaragamuwa in 1885, the service tenures were referred to as "a system which virtually keeps a large class in bondage;" and in the Report for 1887 it was stated that "existing services and rates are outrageously high, and calculated on obsolete services"—that is to say, that when temple serfs desire to pay in money, instead of rendering service to their feudal lords, an equivalent was claimed far beyond the actual value of their services, and if they declined to pay at this rate, or were unable to do so, they found themselves involved in ruinous expenses of litigation.

It is said that the latest legislation on the subject, the Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance of 1889, has failed to afford them relief, and that the only possible solution of such grave difficulties will be for the British Government to resume possession of the lands, and make over to the temples such a portion of the legitimate taxes as her Majesty's Government shall deem proper.

Certainly that carelessly worded Convention of 1815 has led to strange incongruities.

Imagine that so late as 1846, bills were rendered to, and discharged by Government, for hire of devil-dancers, decorating temples, and all other expenses of heathen worship, as "for Her Majesty's Service"!

Till 1852 Buddhist high priests and *Basnaike Nillemés* (*i.e.*, lay chiefs of *Dewales* — *i.e.*, Hindoo temples) were appointed by a written instrument, signed and sealed by the Governor or Government agent. I believe the last appointments are still retained in the gift of Government, as being lucrative posts, wherewith to reward meritorious public servants; and so great is the temptation of such appoint-

ments, that even nominal Christians have abjured their faith and embraced Hindooism in order to qualify themselves for such patronage from their Christian rulers. A case in point occurred so lately as 1889.

About twenty years ago, when attention was first called to the scandalous misappropriation by the priests of the great temple revenues, an ecclesiastical reformation was inaugurated by Sumanagala, the High Priest of Galle and of the Shrine of the Holy Footprint, on the summit of Adam's Peak. In 1873, under the direct patronage and with the aid of the British Government, he founded the Vidyodaya College in Colombo, for the purpose of supplying the whole island with a priesthood thoroughly imbued with all Buddhistic philosophy, discipline, and metaphysics; and who would deem it their special duty to establish such schools in connection with every temple, that Buddhist parents may no longer seek education for their children at Christian schools.

This college is also designed to encourage in the laity a love for the oriental literature which has been, as it were, excavated from beneath accumulated mountains of rubbish by the European students who revived the study of the ancient sacred books. Consequently a very valuable and rapidly increasing oriental library has been here collected, and an enthusiasm has been stirred up, which has drawn student priests from Siam, Cambodia, China, and Japan, to study the sacred Pali and Sanscrit books at this college, which thus gives promise of becoming the centre of a great revival of Buddhism.

It has already established four branch institutions in other parts of Ceylon for the spread of Sanscrit literature, as also a preparatory school in connection with the college itself. The King of Siam has endowed a scholarship for "proficiency in

the Buddhist scriptures," the Government of Ceylon aids the upkeep of the college, and the prizes have been annually distributed to the students by the British Governor himself, on the principle of showing absolute impartiality to all faiths professed by the Queen's subjects.

And yet it has this year been asserted by the editor of the 'Lakminipahana,' that although Government has appointed the teaching of modern cosmology, the teachers in the Vidyodaya and other Buddhist colleges, in common with the priests of Burmah, refuse to teach it, as being positively opposed to the teaching of Buddha, who, claiming perfect knowledge on all subjects, declared that this world is flat, day and night being caused by the sun wandering round Mount Meru, which stands in the centre of the great plain. He says that if modern science is true, then a great part of Buddhism is false, therefore the priests in the Buddhist college at Galle are blamed for wishing to get a pundit to teach them this heretical system.

Seeing the importance which from the earliest days has attached to the possession of anything that could be reverenced as a Buddhistic relic, there was unbounded joy in this college when, at the earnest request of Sumanagala, the Government of Bombay made over to his care certain relics recently excavated from some ancient Indian shrines. These had been placed in the Bombay Museum, and unfortunately, instead of being transmitted from the Museum to the college, they were sent by the Bombay Government to the care of the Ceylon Government, and their despatch and receipt intimated in official documents—an apparently simple transaction, the importance of which, however, was enormously exaggerated by the recipients, being represented to the Buddhist population as an act of official homage to

Gautama, and we all know the oriental tendency to revere whomsoever the king delighteth to honour. Of course the utmost capital is made of every act of simple courtesy on the part of the various distinguished foreigners who show interest in Buddhism or the ancient literature of the East.

As regards the aforesaid relics, trifling as they are in themselves, the news of their discovery created quite a stir in the Buddhist world, and they are undoubtedly interesting to antiquaries and students of strange objects of veneration, being apparently fragments of the identical begging-bowl or gourd in which Gautama Buddha, clad in the yellow robe of a mendicant, collected his daily dole of rice. After his death the bowl was broken, and the fragments were enshrined in various parts of India.

The British mendicant, who chooses to depend on the gifts of his more industrious neighbours for his daily bread, is liable to have work provided for him by an unsympathetic police, but our fellow-subjects in the East continue to find religious mendicancy a recognised and honoured profession. As regards the Buddhist priests, however, their vow of poverty is as much a dead letter as are some other vows. Few indeed trouble themselves to collect their daily bread as alms, while many are private land-owners, having property quite distinct from that of the temples, and they sue or are sued in British courts of law, like ordinary citizens.

Mr J. M. Campbell, of the Bombay Civil Service, in reading an old manuscript on this subject, found so minute a description of the sites of these relic-shrines that he resolved to identify them. First he opened a mound near the village of Sopara on the island of Salsette, twenty miles from Bombay, and therein found an earthenware case containing a copper relic-shrine; within this lay one of silver containing one of

gold, and within that, enshrined in a crystal casket, lay some broken fragments of a gourd. There were also some little images of Buddha.[1]

Three years later, in the ruins of Bassein, he renewed the quest, and found a stone coffer, within which lay a nest of caskets, one inside the other—the innermost one of pure gold, containing several fragments of the bowl, and flowers of gold-leaf. Again Mr Campbell proceeded to excavate a huge mound near Janagadh in Kattywar, supposed to have been constructed about 150 B.C., and therein discovered another stone coffer containing a series of precious caskets, the innermost one of gold, containing a fragment of bone the size of a little finger-nail, supposed to have been saved from the funeral pyre of Gautama Buddha. Beside this relic lay four precious stones and two little bits of wood which are assumed to have been amulets.

Naturally the new and highly educated priesthood who are now being trained at the Vidyodaya College to replace their utterly illiterate and degraded brethren, bless those to whose direct influence and aid they justly ascribe the

[1] To a naturalist the most interesting of all these antiquities was a live frog which was found comfortably enclosed in the outer shrine, where it must have lain embedded for about 2000 years. It was carefully removed with the other treasures, but sad to say, after only two days' enjoyment of its release, it fell a victim to scientific thirst for experiment, a doctor having, for reasons best known to himself, administered a drop of chloroform, whereof it straightway died. Some years ago, when Sir Alexander Gordon Cumming wrote a statement respecting several frogs which were found on his estate deeply embedded in a rocky bank, this letter gave rise to a tempestuous correspondence, in the course of which many very extraordinary but perfectly proven instances were brought forward of similar cases of frog-longevity. One standing proof is the mantelpiece at Chillingham Castle, in which is shown the hollow wherein a live frog was found when the marble was hewn from its quarry.

rekindling of so vigorous a fire from such smouldering embers, and take good care to impress on the minds of the people that the marked honours bestowed on Buddhism are a clear indication of the religious tendencies of their rulers.

And well may the Singhalese be perplexed when they note the very prominent position assigned at many Government ceremonials to a group of proud, unbending, yellow-robed priests, the Christian clergy having no such definite place. Of these only the Anglican bishop and the three Roman Catholic bishops have the privilege of the private *entrée* to the levee at Government House on the Queen's birthday. That honour is, however, bestowed on a large number of Buddhist priests, the reason of this being, that as these own no superior (not even Buddha himself, since, having attained Nirvana, he is practically non-existent), they refuse any external indication of reverence to the Queen's representative; therefore they are exempted from mingling in the procession of ordinary mortals, where this peculiarity would be too conspicuous. Strange to say, they have also frequently been privileged on State occasions to chant a solemn benediction in Pali, invoking the blessing of Buddha on their friendly rulers, who remained standing during a ceremony which most felt to be singularly out of place.

Still more incomprehensible to the Singhalese, as a mere act of impartiality, has been the recent official recognition (an innovation assuredly uncalled for) of Buddha's birthday as a general holiday, on the same footing as Christmas Day! a measure which has done more than anything else to revive popular interest in Buddhism.[1] Old inhabitants tell us that

[1] The Tamil's great holiday is the feast of the New Year, according to Hindoo and Singhalese reckoning. This year it fell on April 12.

The Mohammedan festival of the Hegira fell on July 17.

All these are now officially recognised as general holidays.

they have never known this day to be observed till, at the instance of certain Englishmen who have formed themselves into a "Buddhist Defence Committee," *the British Government chose to make it a public holiday.*

To the disgust of the inhabitants of the Fort at Galle, which has been exclusively Christian for the last three hundred years, a house within the Fort was three years ago transformed into a noisy temple, and at the instigation of an English apostate from the Christian priesthood, discordant midnight carols were (for the first time) shrieked in honour of "our Lord Buddha"! The date of this festival is determined by that of the first full moon in Wesak—*i.e.*, April-May—and I observe that this ranges from May 3 in one year to May 25 in another. The festival is observed with an annually increasing show of street decorations (the so-called Buddhist flag, invented by Colonel Olcott, predominating), and processions with banners, images, devil-dancers, beating of drums, tomtoms, and other deafening ecclesiastical music, continuing without intermission from dawn till sunset, and the police have their hands fully occupied in preserving the peace between these now somewhat aggressive processionists and the native Roman Catholics.

In fact, in 1883 a very serious riot occurred in Colombo, not in connection with the "Wesak"—*i.e.*, Buddha's birthday—but (which may edify theoretic Buddhists!) on the occasion of a seven weeks' festival in honour of *setting the eyes in a large new image of Buddha reclining*, in the Vihara or temple at Kotahena (in Colombo).[1]

[1] In Robert Knox's fascinating account of his twenty years of honourable captivity in the heart of Ceylon, from A.D. 1659 to 1680, he describes how religious mendicants carry about a small image of the Buddou, covered with a piece of white cloth. "For this god, above all others, they seem to have a high respect; . . . ladies and gentlemen of good quality will sometimes, in

During all this period a succession of priests were engaged in ceaselessly preaching *bana* (the discourses of Buddha) and reciting *pirit* (a formula supposed to avert evil), and on the last day of the festival five hundred priests were to be present in order that the five hundred sections of the "Tripitaka" scriptures might be repeated by them in one day, in return for which, each was to be presented with a set of the "Atapirikara"—*i.e.*, the eight articles which constitute the personal property of a Buddhist priest. These articles, together with food for the assembled priests, were to be offered by the inhabitants of many neighbouring villages, each of which was to bring its gift on a special day, escorted by a noisy religious procession. A bestowal of merit was promised to all who thus adorned themselves with the ornaments of faith.

Unfortunately this temple (which, though modern, small, and externally insignificant, has recently been highly decorated internally, and has risen to a position of importance in the Buddhist revival) stands within a few hundred yards of the Roman Catholic Cathedral,[1] so that the worshippers therein had full benefit of this prolonged parade of noisy rejoicings, continuing all through Lent. They endured it

a fit of devotion to the Buddou, go a-begging for him. Some will make the image of this god at their own charge. *Before the eyes are made, it is not accounted a god, but a lump of ordinary metal, and thrown about the shop with no more regard than anything else;* but when the eyes are to be made, the artificer is to have a good gratification, besides the first agreed-upon reward."

"THE EYES BEING FORMED, IT IS THENCEFORWARD A GOD, and then, being brought with honour from the workman's shop, it is dedicated by solemnities and sacrifices, and carried with great state into its shrine or little house, which is before built and prepared for it."

[1] The cathedral premises, about ten acres in extent, were granted to the Church by the Dutch in 1779, but had been occupied by the Roman Catholics long before that date. They comprise the residence of the bishop and priests, the schoolhouse, and convent.

all peaceably till they realised that these processions were to be continued through Holy Week, when they would inevitably clash with the customary Roman Catholic processions. Moreover, very offensive messages were sent to the Roman Catholics expressing a determination to hold festivals of rejoicing on Good Friday.

Application was accordingly made to the authorities to prohibit Buddhist demonstrations during certain hours on Good Friday and Easter Day; but unfortunately, in the anxiety to please all parties, some confusion arose between the licences already granted and afterwards cancelled, and though no collision occurred, the peace of Good Friday was disturbed by very bitter feeling. On Easter Day, however, the Buddhists were resolved not to forego their procession in honour of some particular phase of the moon. The Roman Catholic congregations had dispersed after morning service, when suddenly the bells of the cathedral and of all the neighbouring Roman Catholic churches were simultaneously set ringing violently. This seems to be a recognised call to assemble for some urgent purpose, and yet, strange to say, all the bells were left unguarded. In a very few minutes an excited mob of the lowest of the Roman Catholics, armed with clubs and marked on the forehead and back with white crosses, quite *à la* St Bartholomew, assembled, determined to prevent the procession from passing their cathedral. A very serious riot ensued, which resulted in one person being killed; and thirty, including twelve poor police constables, were so seriously injured as to necessitate their being taken to the hospital.

Most of the ill feeling aroused on this occasion seems to have been due to the irritating and violent language of a notable priest of the Amarapoora sect, Migettuwatte Unnanse,

a leading member of Colonel Olcott's Theosophical Society, and a man thoroughly versed in all the anti-Christian literature of England, America, and India—an eloquent man, and a most bitter opponent of the Christian religion, which he strove by every means to bring into contempt and ridicule. He denounced Christianity with such energy, while working with all his might for the extension of Buddhism, that he came to be distinguished as the fighting champion of the Buddhist faith.

So when he died, in the autumn of 1890, it was deemed fitting to make his funeral the occasion of a great demonstration. His body was embalmed and placed in a coffin with glass sides and lid, in order that crowds might see his face once more, and also to give time for organising a great ceremonial a week later, by which time fully fifteen thousand people from various parts of the Isle had assembled at Colombo to attend the funeral, and all united their processions to form one enormous *perehera* round the city.

On Sunday the 28th, this multitude formed a funeral procession more than a mile in length. First came "the company of the preachers"; then a strong body of tomtom-beaters, followed by a multitude of Singhalese women; after them twelve of the chief Buddhist priests in very modern jinrikishas, followed by a hundred and thirty minor priests in their yellow robes, all walking beneath a long canopy of white cloth, denoting the honour due to them. Then (more modern innovations) came the Volunteer band playing the Dead March in "Saul"; and after this a gaudy hearse, containing the coffin and loads of white flowers, was carried on the shoulders of fifty men.

In these days when the respective advantages of cremation *versus* interment are so largely discussed, it is interesting

to learn that in Ceylon the cleanly aid of fire is, by the Buddhists, reserved as a special honour for a few of the most eminent priests. On the present occasion the funeral pyre had been erected on a rising ground just beyond the General Cemetery—a high erection of palm-trunks, with tall palms at the four corners, supporting a canopy of white cloth. The coffin was deposited in an opening in the centre of the pyre, which was then mounted by a succession of priests and laymen, who addressed the kneeling crowds around. These at each telling sentence raised their clasped hands heavenward, exclaiming "Saadu, Saadu!" the united voices of this great multitude producing a deep-toned roar which died away in the distance like the booming of the waves, or the murmur of distant thunder.

Then, after solemn chanting and prayer, the pyre was ignited to a loud accompaniment of tomtom-beating, and the crowds reverently watched the work of the flames till at last they reached the white canopy, when all burst into one shout of triumph, this being the symbol of the spirit's full emancipation—*i.e.*, till its next birth in some new state of being.

Of course a scene so solemn could not but have an incongruous element, which was furnished by an English Buddhist, who could not resist such an opportunity for attracting attention, and so took his place on the pyre "as the representative of America, Europe, and England," to deliver a funeral oration (through an interpreter), assuring all present that very soon all America and Europe would receive the faith of Buddha—after which he proved his self-sacrificing devotion to his newly found faith by tossing his sun-hat on to the blazing pyre, an example which led to the cremation of many good tortoise-shell combs and handkerchiefs!

CHAPTER IV.

THE CRUISE OF THE CASTLE JERMYN.

Rivers— Lagoons—Noah's Ark—Lake Negombo—Kabragoya—Objections to milk—Insect-pests—Reverential customs—The Luna-Oya—Monkeys—" Betty."

Perhaps the most fascinating feature of Ceylonese scenery is the number and the beauty of the rivers, ranging from picturesque mountain torrents (which form cascades and waterfalls as they hurry from their cradle among the rhododendrons) to stately streams, flowing swiftly though silently to meet the thundering surf.

Their course is so short that their descent from the mountains is necessarily rapid; consequently very few of these are navigable, except within a few miles of the sea, where flat-bottomed boats and canoes ply. By far the longest river is the Maha-welli-ganga, which, rising near Adam's Peak, wanders through the mountains till it reaches Kandy, the mountain capital, whence, descending to the plains, it travels northward, a total distance of 134 miles, and finally enters the sea by several branches near Trincomalee.

Next to this ranks the Kelany-ganga, also called the Mutwal river, which is 84 miles long, and which, as we

have already seen, flows into the sea near Colombo. All the other rivers of Ceylon are from 10 to 20 miles shorter.

As a natural result of so short and swift a descent from the mountains, these streams are laden with sand and soil, and a very remarkable geographical feature (of which I have already spoken in reference to the formation of the lake at Colombo) is due to the meeting of these surcharged waters with the strong sea-currents, which in the north-east and south-west monsoons sweep along the coast, and are likewise saturated with sand. These prevent the rivers from carrying their earth-freight farther, consequently it is all deposited in sandy bars, which, likewise receiving the deposits of these gulf-streams, rapidly increase, and form such effectual barriers as compel the rivers to flow north or south behind this embankment of their own creation.

Thus strangely indented lagoons, many miles in length, of still, silent, fresh water, lie separated from the booming surf by only a narrow belt of sand—perhaps only partially carpeted with marine convolvuli, but generally clothed with quaint screw-pines, mangroves, palms, and other trees. The effect of the roar of the unseen surf, as heard while one's boat glides silently on these still rivers embowered in richest vegetation, is very impressive.

This peculiarity is most strikingly developed on the east side of the Isle, as at Batticaloa, where the rivers have formed one labyrinthine lagoon fully 50 miles in length, divided from the ocean by an embankment of their own construction, nowhere exceeding a mile and a half in width, and all clothed with cocoa-palms. The same formation extends all the way from Trincomalee to the far north of the Isle.

These very peculiar estuaries are known as Gobbs, and

they were turned to good account by the Dutch, who cut canals to connect some of the most important, and thus formed a continuous calm water-way on each side of the Isle, connecting sea-coast towns. Thus, on the west coast you can travel by these canals and lagoons all the way from Caltura to Colombo, and thence right north up to Kalpitiya. Such delightful house-boats as those in which foreign residents in China make their water-excursions, are here unknown luxuries, but with a little contrivance an ordinary flat-bottomed rice-boat may be made to do duty instead, and thus furnishes the means for a very enjoyable cruise.

Most fortunately for me, soon after my arrival the Bishop had occasion to visit various churches and schools along the coast to the north of Colombo, and resolved to travel by water. He had decided that his daughter should bear him company, and greatly to my delight, I too was invited to join the expedition.

I confess that when I think of all the difficulties in arranging "house-room" for guests in luxurious British homes, I often remember with amazement the unselfish kindness which contrives to make the smallest colonial houses so wondrously elastic (exemplifying the good old proverb that "where there's heart-room there's hearth-room"); but never in all my wanderings have I met with so very practical a proof of such hospitality, as that which assigned me an extemporised berth on board "The Castle Jermyn," as we dubbed our craft when commencing our voyage, though long ere our return the little "Noah's Ark" better described the floating home in which were congregated so great a variety of curious living creatures, to say nothing of the skins of various birds of gay plumage, and animals presented to us by many kind friends.

The live offerings included six or eight land-tortoises of various sizes, and several large handsome turtles, which shared "the hinder part of the ship" with the picturesque Singhalese crew and the Bishop's Singhalese major-domo, and were turned out at night to swim in the shallow water, while our own quarters became the play-ground of a ubiquitous bull-dog puppy and a very young mongoose, so small as to earn from my companions the nickname of "The Rat." A more affectionate little pet never existed. It at once recognised me as its special mistress, never seeming so happy as when trotting along beside me, creeping quietly into my lap or nestling on my shoulder, and at night curling itself, uninvited, into one of my slippers, whence the little soft hairy creature darted out to greet me with a gentle little murmurous cry the instant I stirred in the morning.

It very soon outgrew its slipper-cradle, and when we returned to St Thomas's College, it selected more roomy sleeping quarters in a dark corner of my room, where it lay rolled up like a furry ball. I fed it principally on bread and milk, and sometimes I could not resist giving it an egg as a great treat, though well aware that I was therein injudiciously awakening what might prove an inconvenient taste. I do not, however, believe that Goosie ever sinned in this or any other direction. No blame attached to its short happy life.

My gentle pet rapidly developed to the size of an average cat, its hair, which was partly brown and partly silvery grey, becoming hard and wiry, and although its devotion to me as its adopted mother continued to be most touching, it was occasionally inconvenient. I was therefore not altogether sorry, on my return to Colombo after an absence of some months, to find that "Goosie" had transferred its allegiance to the friend in whose care I had left it, and in whose garden

it had done valiant combat with several cobras, the plucky little creature having developed all the abhorrence towards these for which its race is so remarkable.[1]

Sad to say, it soon fell a victim to its valour; for, though

[1] Soon after my visit to Galle, a villager at Happugalle (about three miles distant) saw a mongoose attack a large cobra. He stated that the combat continued for some time, after which the mongoose, apparently unable to cope with the serpent, beat a hasty retreat to the jungle. Presently he reappeared, accompanied by a grey mongoose. So soon as the cobra perceived the new-comer, he was paralysed with terror and crouched before the mongoose, which rushed forward and snapped off the serpent's head. The Singhalese believe that the small grey mongoose is king of the race. So fully is the skill of the mongoose as a snake-killer established, that I cannot understand why it is not more commonly trained as a domestic pet in countries where these deadly reptiles abound. As a rat-killer it has done splendid service in the West Indies, where the devastation wrought on sugar, coffee, cocoa, and other plantations by the great rat-army, ranged from £100,000 to £150,000 per annum, till in 1872 Mr Espeut happily imported some mongooses direct from India. Four males and five females reached him in safety and were turned out on his estate. In a wonderfully short time they increased and multiplied to such an extent as to overrun the whole island. Thousands of young ones were captured by negroes, and sold to planters in very remote districts, and as these creatures are excellent swimmers and make their way across streams and lagoons, they quickly found their way to every corner. Naturally such prolific colonists have become somewhat of a pest, and the planters are now compelled to thin their ranks.

In 1884 Ceylon exported 105 mongooses to Australia, there to wage war against the rabbit legions. Well may we wish them success!

In Egypt the mongoose (*alias* ichneumon) is kept as a domestic rat and mouse catcher, and moreover is invaluable from its talent for raking up the sand wherein crocodiles have laid their eggs, to the number of perhaps fifty in a brood, which it devours with *gusto*. It also kills many of these little monsters when newly hatched, and is altogether a true benefactor to humanity. The services of "Pharaoh's Rat" were so fully recognised by the ancient Egyptians that it was treated as a sacred animal, pampered during life, and divinely honoured after death. Funds were set apart for the support of representatives of the race, which, like the sacred cats, were fed on bread soaked in milk, and fish specially caught for their use by the fishers of the Nile. To kill a mongoose was a criminal act, and whenever one was found dead, its mummied remains were carefully laid in the catacombs with the other sacred animals.

by its marvellous agility it contrived in several instances to elude the darts of the serpent, the first bite also proved the last — no wise old mongoose having instructed this poor young one in the healing properties of that herb which, it is said, the wild mongoose eats as an effectual antidote to cobra poison. (This is said to be the *Mimosa occandra*, which in Ceylon is called the *Nakulishta—i.e.*, "the desire of the mongoose.") So my poor Goosie died. But what concerns us at present was only her place in our boat-home, where her infantile sporting instincts found scope in chasing the pretty little lizards which found refuge in the thatched roof. As seen on our first visit, the said boat was not attractive, being dingy, dark, and airless; but a little ingenious carpentering soon worked wonders. In the first place, the thatched roof was raised bodily, so as to leave four inches all round, admitting light and air to our sleeping quarters. Then the deck was matted, and the interior was lined with white calico, and divided into compartments, so that we each had our special quarters, with our beds, chairs, tables, hanging-trays and pockets, bags, books, sun-umbrellas, butterfly-nets, writing and sketching materials of all sorts. To these were soon added constantly renewed baskets of fruit—great bunches of green or yellow bananas and plantains, pine-apples, oranges, mangoes, and custard-apples, and ever-increasing stores of quaint seeds, shells, and divers curiosities.

The boatmen, who were all fishermen (which is almost equivalent to saying that they were all Roman Catholics), had their quarters astern, as had also the cook and his flock of ducks and hens; and how eight human beings could stow themselves away in so small a space, and carry on their existence so silently, was a marvel. The fact of their being

Singhalese secured us against the interminable songs by which the Tamils cheer their work, and which in such close quarters would have been unendurable. When they had work to do "forrard," they ran lightly over the thatch without disturbing their unwonted passengers, for whom they were never weary of collecting lovely flowers and exquisite climbing ferns, with which we adorned our quarters, devoting one basin to the most gorgeous jungle blossoms —scarlet, white, and gold—and another to dainty water-lilies—white, pink, and blue—while all else found a niche on the foundation of ferns with which we fringed the edge of the movable roof, part of which was constructed to draw backwards or forwards, so that in case of rain our "sitting-room" would have been well protected. Happily we were favoured with lovely weather, and so enjoyed to the full the peaceful beauty of both days and nights. One flower, which our sympathetic collectors brought with special appreciation, was a most exquisite orchid which they call the Wanna Rajah,[1] or king of the Wanna or Forest (the comprehensive name given to the great tract of hot and generally arid land in the extreme north of the Isle). On the upper side, the leaves of this orchid are like black velvet veined with gold, while the under side is of a delicate pink. The fragrant white blossom hangs on a pink stalk. It seems to flourish specially in marshy localities.

A tiny canoe (just the trunk of a tree scooped out, and balanced by a log floating alongside of it, attached to it by a couple of bamboos) floated astern, ready to land us at any point where the cool loveliness of the river-banks proved irresistibly tempting; and strangely fascinating indeed was the deep shadow of the beautiful forest-trees overhanging

[1] *Anœctochilus setaceus.*

the clear sunlit waters, the intense silence broken only by the cry of some wild bird, or the deep hooting of the large wanderoo monkeys, while at short regular intervals came the low roar as of distant thunder, which told of mighty green waves breaking on the sand-reef of their own creation.

It was in the middle of February that we embarked for the three weeks of "water-gipsying," every hour of which proved so full of novelty and interest. A beautiful drive from St Thomas's College, Colombo, brought us to the Mutwal river, or Kelany-ganga, where our boat-home awaited us.

Crossing that broad majestic stream, we entered one of the canals cut by the Dutch, parallel with the sea, and thereon glided smoothly into the wide shallow lake of Negombo, at the north end of which we anchored for the night, at a picturesque village of the same name twenty-three miles from Colombo.

All along the canal we passed a succession of winding streams and marshy places with special beauties of their own, and several small lagoons—lovely glassy pools—covered with pure white water-lilies, and one variety with petals just tipped with lilac and the under side of the leaf purple. These lakelets are fringed with various species of graceful palms, with an undergrowth of luxuriant ferns and handsome shrubs; while the marshes are glorified by the rich glossy foliage of the mangrove, with clusters of white blossom and large green fruit resembling oranges, but very poisonous.

These eventually turn scarlet, as do also the pine-like fruit of the Pandanus or screw-pine (so called from the corkscrew pattern in which its leaves grow from the stem). The roots of this plant are among the oddest vagaries of the vegetable

kingdom. Here and there a patch of the flame blossom, called by the Singhalese *eribuddu*, glowed really like fire as the setting sun shone on its scarlet pea-shaped flowers set in a crown of scarlet leaves. Then there was a sort of prickly acanthus with large blue flowers, also pea-shaped, and a sort of acacia with bright yellow star-shaped blossom.

Negombo Lake is about four miles in width, and all around us were picturesque canoes, whose owners were diligently fishing in its quiet waters. They have a curious method of frightening fish into the net, which is held by some of the men, while others wave long fringes of torn plantain-leaves or cocoa-palm similar to those which are hung up as decorations at any festival. The fish thus alarmed are expected to jump net-wards. At night the fishers carry a blazing torch downwards, so that the glare is all on the water. The torch consists of a fagot of sticks, and from its centre projects a long sharp knife with which to impale any large fish which is seen resting in the shallows.

This was our first night on the water, and to our dismay we found that we had neglected to bring our mosquito-nets, an omission which left us all wholly at the mercy of those venomous little insects, who all night long hummed a chorus of delight as they took it by turns to feast on us, their helpless victims. Of course their onslaughts involved a sleepless night and a feverish morning; but ere the next sunset we extemporised very efficient nets by hanging up muslin petticoats, which effectually protected our heads, though an incautious foot occasionally revealed itself and suffered accordingly.

Before sunrise we were once more under way, and leaving the lake, turned into a most picturesque canal running right through the native town, of houses embowered in large-

leaved tropical shrubs, overshadowed by tall palms, and the water covered with very varied boats and canoes.

Leaving the town, our quiet water-way still lay beneath overarching palm-trees, and between banks matted with the dark glossy foliage and large lilac blossoms of the goat's-foot ipomea, a handsome marine convolvulus which forms a thick carpet, binding the arid sandbanks along the seaboard.

Presently we crossed the mouth of the Maha-Oya or great stream, a broad majestic river, gliding silently to join the ocean. It was a vision of wonderful peace to look along its calm waters to the equally calm ocean, whose margin was only defined by the periodical uprising of a great green rolling wave which broke in dazzling white surf with a deep booming roar.

That strange solemn sound continued for hours to reach us from the unseen ocean, as, turning into the Ging-Oya, another most lovely stream, we followed its windings, almost parallel with the sea, which yet was effectually hidden by a narrow bank of luxuriant jungle, and tall palms which cast their cool deep shade on the glassy waters. But for that ever-recurring reminder of

"The league-long rollers thundering on the shore,"

there was not a sound to break the silence, save only the rustle of dry reeds or the gentle ripple of our boat sailing with a light breeze. Even the shy creatures which haunt these banks were undisturbed, and amongst others we observed several large iguanas (or, as the Singhalese call them, *kabragoya*), huge lizards from five to six feet in length. Though very prettily marked, they are ungainly-looking creatures, and I confess to having felt somewhat qualmish the first time I came suddenly upon one in the forest; but

they are quite harmless if unmolested. They have, however, a good weapon of defence in their strong tail, with which they can inflict a blow not quickly forgotten. They feed on ants and insects, and are amphibious—being equally at home on marshy ground or in the water.

Another lizard very nearly as large, called Talla-goya, is so tame that it scarcely moves away from human beings, and even comes and lives in gardens, though it thereby courts its doom—its flesh being considered as delicate as that of a rabbit, and its skin being in request for shoemaking. Certainly its appearance is not prepossessing.

We caught glimpses of various smaller lizards, especially a lovely bright green one about a foot in length. Strange to say, when angry, these creatures turn pale yellow, and the head becomes bright red. I believe they are akin to the ever-changing chameleon, which, however, prefers the dry districts farther to the north of the Isle.

Glorious large butterflies skimmed lightly over the water—some with wings like black velvet, and others of the most lustrous metallic blue; and kingfishers, golden orioles, and other birds of radiant plumage, flitted over the waters. One bird something like a plover is known as the "Did he do it?" because of its quaint inquisitive cry, which seems ceaselessly to reiterate this question.

As the evening came on, we were treated to a concert of croaking frogs, and jackals alternately barking and calling in eerie tones. Finally we anchored for the night beneath an overhanging tree which was evidently specially favoured by the fire-flies, for their tiny green lamps glittered in every corner of the dark foliage, ceaselessly flashing to and fro in such mazy dance, that when we looked beyond them to the quiet stars, it seemed to our bewildered eyes

as if these too were in motion! I use the word fire-flies in deference to a common error. In reality these fairy light-bearers are tiny beetles which carry their dainty green lantern beneath the tail, and veil or unveil its light at pleasure, as a policeman does his bull's-eye lantern—hence the intermittent light which vanishes and reappears several times in a minute.

On the following morning a kind European heard of our arrival, and brought us most welcome gifts of fruit and milk. Strange to say, the Singhalese have an invincible objection to milking their cows, even when they possess large herds of cattle, and the calves might very well spare a certain amount. This prejudice has been in a measure conquered in the immediate neighbourhood of towns where foreigners require a regular supply; but (like the Chinese) no Singhalese man, woman, or child seems ever to drink cow's milk, though a little is occasionally used in the form of curds and eaten with *ghee*, which is a sort of rancid butter.

From the Ging-Oya we passed by a short canal into the Luna-Oya, another even more lovely river; but first we crossed a fascinating lagoon literally covered with water-lilies of various size and colour,—small white ones, larger ones like cups of creamy ivory, with green calyx; exquisite pink lilies with brown calyx, and the under side of the leaf of a rich purple. Besides these there were myriads of tiny white blossoms no bigger than a silver penny, which, together with their flat floating leaves, were so like lilliputian lilies, that we could scarcely believe they were not, till we pulled up a cluster and found that leaves and flowers all grew in a bunch from one little rootlet near the surface, instead of each having its own stem, three or four feet in

length, and smooth as a piece of India-rubber tubing, rising from the bed of the lake.

Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention; and great was my satisfaction when, having lost my black hair-ribbon, I found that one of these half-dried stems answered the purpose admirably, being rather elastic and perfectly flexible. But the water-gipsies soon discovered many such treasures in the jungle. The smooth tendrils and filaments of various climbing plants supplied us with excellent string several yards in length; indeed, we found lianas as thin as thread, and quite as pliant, hanging without a twist or a knot from the top of the tallest trees; and as to pins, we had only to select the length we required from the too abundant supply of needle-like thorns, which in truth are so marked a characteristic of the Ceylonese forest, that one might almost accept it as a proof that here indeed was the original Paradise—for notwithstanding all its wonderful beauty, Ceylon assuredly bears a double share of the curse anent thorns and briers!

We soon discovered that most of the jungle flowers we saw and coveted were thus guarded,—the jessamine-like stars of crimson ixora, the fragrant blossoms of the wild lemon, and many another. There is even one sort of palm whose whole stem bristles with long sharp needles. And besides these dangers, we soon discovered that almost every branch of every flowering shrub is the home of a colony of large red ants, who glue the leaves together, entirely concealing their nests; so that however carefully you may have looked for them, no sooner do you venture cautiously to gather the flower which tempts you, than in a moment a legion of vicious red ants rush forth from their ambush, and covering your unwary arm, swarm into the innermost recesses of your sleeve, all the time biting most painfully.

What with ants biting and mosquitoes and small sand-flies feasting on us, we certainly suffered a good deal, the irritation produced being such that we had simply to take our hair-brushes and brush our poor arms and shoulders to try and counteract it.

Another fruitful source of irritation was "prickly heat," which is the effect produced on many people by constant perspiration. The sufferer receives no pity, as he is told it is the best safeguard against fever; but nevertheless the discomfort is excessive, and various remedies are recommended, of which the simplest, and, I think, the most efficacious, is every morning to rub one's self all over with limes, cut in half, and presently sponge off the healing juice. A thin solution of either alum or powdered borax applied with a feather is also beneficial—a piece of alum the size of a walnut, dissolved in a pint of water, being sufficient to last several days.[1]

We were very fortunate in escaping more serious dangers. One evening, as we sat on deck in the bright starlight, I suddenly observed a gruesome centipede, fully seven inches long, coiled up in my lap! With sudden impulse the Bishop flicked it with his handkerchief, when it fell to the deck and escaped, leaving us with a horribly all-overish sensation of centipedes in every corner. Happily neither it nor any of its family favoured us with another visit. It is really wonderful, in a country where venomous creatures abound as they do in Ceylon, how very rarely one sees any of them, and how quickly one acquires the instinctive habit of beating the grass or withered leaves before one's steps, in order to warn possible snakes to wriggle out of the way, which

[1] If there is abrasion of the skin, equal parts of oxide of zinc and carbonate of magnesia is very soothing.

they seem always ready to do if they have time. Indeed, the mere vibration of a booted footstep generally suffices to give them the alarm—the sufferers from snake-bite being almost invariably barefooted natives, whose silent approach is unnoticed.

On the other hand, the land-leeches, which swarm in damp places and luxuriant grass, have no tendency to fly from man. On the contrary, the footfall of man or beast is as a welcome dinner-bell, at sound of which the hungry little creatures hurry from all sides; and as each is furnished with five pair of eyes, they can keep a sharp look-out for their prey, which they do by resting on the tip of the tail, and raising themselves perpendicularly to look around. Then arching their body head-foremost, and bringing up the tail, they rapidly make for their victim. Being only about an inch long, and no thicker than a stout pin, they contrive to wriggle through stockings, and commence their attack so gently that several may be feasting without attracting attention, till being gorged, and distended to about a couple of inches in length, and the size of a quill-pen, they cease sucking; but blood sometimes continues to flow till checked by a squeeze of lemon-juice.

In this respect also we fortunately suffered little, thanks to constant watchfulness and precautions, but our bare-legged coolies were cruelly victimised; and we saw both cattle and dogs terribly worried by a much larger leech, which infests the tanks and attacks all animals coming to drink, attaching themselves to the muzzle, and thence passing into the nostrils and throat. But on our river voyage we were free from these pests.

Speaking of the ready-made treasures of the jungle in the way of needles and thread, I must not forget the *Rita gaha*,

or sack-tree, the bark of which literally supplies all but ready-made sacks of a thick texture, akin to felt. The tree having been felled, its branches are cut up into logs, each about the size of sack required. The logs are sometimes soaked in water for a while to soften the bark. This, however, is not invariable. In any case, the bark is beaten with a wooden mallet till it can be turned inside out, and drawn off as a serpent casts his skin.

All that is needed to complete these nature-woven sacks is that they should be sewn up at one end. They are so durable that they last for years, and so elastic that they stretch considerably with use, without, however, losing strength. So you see the jungle fairy-godmothers really do provide most useful treasures!

Just before leaving the canal which connects the Ging-Oya with the Lily Lake, we halted at a village where we saw a Singhalese wedding procession, the attentive bridegroom (whose knot of glossy back-hair was, of course, fastened by a very large tortoise-shell comb, besides a circular comb on the forehead) holding a large umbrella over a very sedate-looking bride, who walked beside him dressed in brocade, with a wreath on the back of the head, and the hair fastened with golden pins and a golden comb. This bridal dress, however, was not becoming, and we awarded the palm of beauty to a young girl in white, shading herself with a large banana-leaf.

The people crowded to the banks to see the novel sight of European ladies travelling in a padda-boat.[1] Most of the children were dressed with the elegant simplicity of our ancestors in the original Eden, except that some were adorned with one pearl tied round the arm as an amulet, while others for the same purpose wear a tiny tin cylinder

[1] Rice-cargo-boat.

containing some fetish, fastened to the waist. The little Roman Catholics are generally distinguished by a small crucifix or locket with dedication to some saint, but many wear tiny bits of embroidered rag which are sold by the priests as charms!

Nowhere have I seen more fascinating little children with such soft lovely brown eyes—coming so coaxingly to offer us gifts of flowers; and their mellifluous speech is as attractive as their personal appearance. One handsome man brought his beautiful little girl and asked us to sketch her. She was quite naked, but a few minutes later he brought her back in all the magnificence of her green jacket and red skirt, with coral necklace and ear-rings. As the proud father brought her on board, his own long silky black hair got unfastened, and fell in rich masses over his shoulders. The effect was most artistic, but unfortunately in Ceylon it is not considered respectful to wear the hair hanging down in presence of a superior, so it is always coiled up in a knot. (In China it is just the contrary—the man who, for convenience while working, twists his long black plait round his head, must always let it down in presence of any superior.)

In this island where the two races, Tamil and Singhalese, meet one at every turn, one is sometimes struck by a curious point of difference in their symbols of respect. The Tamil must cover his head in presence of a superior, and an extra large turban indicates extra reverence. The Singhalese, on the contrary, should appear bareheaded: so when a person of any recognised rank approaches, the Tamils, who have been sitting with bare shaven heads, quickly twist on the long strips of cloth which form their turbans; whereas the Singhalese, who perhaps have let down their hair and thrown a bright-coloured handkerchief over it, quickly pull

off the handkerchief and twist up their hair as if they were going to bathe.]

In old days, under native rule, Singhalese of certain low castes were prohibited from wearing any covering above the waist, and any one presuming to do so was liable to have his or her raiment torn off by order of any person of higher station. Even those of the highest caste threw off their upper garments on entering a temple, covered shoulders being then deemed as irreverent as we should consider it for a man to wear a hat in church.

But these old customs are happily traditions of the past, as are also in a great measure the objectionable features of caste distinctions, which here are far less obtrusive than in India, even among the Tamils.

Long years of intercourse between these two races has in some respects tended to assimilation, most obviously in that all Tamil women go about bareheaded like the Singhalese, an innovation very remarkable in contrast with their strictly veiled sisters on the mainland. Happily they retain their graceful drapery in preference to the little white jacket and tight loin-cloth invariably worn by the Singhalese women.

Our sail up the Luna-Oya was lovely as a fairy dream, the banks on either side being clothed with richest jungle—great forest-trees overhanging the still waters, and matted with festoons of luxuriant creepers, whose exquisite emerald green glorified the darker foliage of the trees. Especially rich were the masses of a plant suggestive of Virginia creeper, and brightened here and there with a touch of scarlet, which, however, in Ceylon tells not of autumn and approaching death, but of spring and fresh young foliage. There are some trees which, on first bursting into young leaf, are a blaze of glorious scarlet or crimson, and then gradually

turn to gold or chocolate colour, finally assuming varied shades of green.

Here and there we came on clumps of cocoa-nut palms, and then we always looked out for picturesque huts well-nigh hidden by the long waving leaves of the banana, tall sugar-canes, and the very long fronds of young palms—for, according to Singhalese lore, this friendly palm can only flourish within sound of the human voice, and near the sea. This pretty theory is not strictly borne out by facts, as there are flourishing cocoa-nut groves at various places (such as at Badulla, Matale, and Gampola), at elevations of from 1400 to 2200 feet above the sea-level, and a hundred miles inland. Still these are exceptions, and certainly all the finest plantations of cocoa-palm lie along the shore in a belt of less than fifteen miles in width.

We noted a curious method of marking boundaries by planting two cocoa-nuts in one hole, so that they grow up as twins. We also saw curiously wedded palmyra-palms and banyan-trees; seeds of the latter contrive to niche themselves in the rough bark of the former, and their enfolding roots soon form a network encompassing the parent trees. Ere long these grow so powerful that the palm is killed, and the strange pillar of white roots and branches stands alone, —a monument of ingratitude.

As we floated on through the deep jungly shade, we occasionally met picturesque fishing-boats and canoes, which formed most attractive foregrounds. Specially so was a large double canoe—namely, two canoes floating side by side, supporting one wide deck with heavy thatch, and laden with huge clusters of green plantains. The fine bronze figures of the crew with blue-brown shadows, the dark quilted sail, and darker reflections, made an ideal study in browns; indeed an

artist might make his fortune in painting the groups which present themselves at every turn; no need for paid models here, where every careless attitude seems naturally graceful, and where tailors and broad-cloth are of no account, for a fisherman's full dress consists of either a large straw hat or a bright-coloured handkerchief thrown loosely over black flowing locks, a second handkerchief fastened round the loins, and a crucifix or medallion of some saint worn round the neck.

Such figures as these, whether seen against the clear blue sky or the dark sail, are always harmonious. On gala days many wear a large handkerchief over one shoulder with a picture of the Virgin and Child or full-face portrait of the Pope. Others display pictures of the Derby Races, or some such exciting European scene!

This night we anchored beneath a Suriya tree, covered with blossoms. Vivid sheet-lightning illumined the sky and the forest, even wakening up the old Wanderoos,[1] who hooted their indignation. These are rather small, very grave, bearded monkeys, the patriarchs of the race, of the most venerable appearance, clothed in thick dark iron-grey hair, with a rough shaggy white beard, and a thick fringe of white hair on their head. Some species, however, are grey, with black beards. They go about in troops of twenty or thirty, swinging from branch to branch, and carrying their neat little babies. They are very easily tamed, and some have been taken to visit sacred monkey-shrines in India, where they are held in special honour because of their grave demeanour. Their deep-toned sobbing cry, as we so often heard it resounding through the silent forest in the stillness of early dawn (albeit I can only describe it as something like that of our common donkey!), was most eerie, blending with the

[1] *Presbytes cephalopterus.*

shrill cries of all manner of birds, whose voices for the most part are as discordant as their plumage is radiant. To this sweeping assertion, however, I must make one exception in favour of a very pretty wood-pigeon,[1] whose low melodious cooing is one of the most soothing influences of the forest.

Of the five varieties of the great monkey clan, which are found in Ceylon, four are classed as Wanderoos: the largest and most powerful of this family are found only in the mountain forests. The fifth Ceylonese monkey is the Rilawa; these are very small, of a warm russet colour, with a pale very human little face, and a shock head, with hair projecting like a thatch, or sometimes so long as to resemble that of a miniature human being. When tamed they make charming little pets. On one of his forest-rides the Bishop captured a baby one, which he brought home, and which became a most amusing and affectionate member of the family.

Its own relations, having been disturbed by the approach of the riders, scampered off among the branches in such hot haste that this poor little one, who was clinging to its mother, dropped on the ground in front of the Bishop's horse. The "horse-keeper" (*i.e.*, a running groom) picked it up and handed it to the Bishop, to whom it immediately cuddled up for protection, nestling inside his coat, where it lay comfortably till he reached a rest-house, where it was fed and cared for.

Curiously enough, that very afternoon a native from a neighbouring village brought the Bishop an offering of fruit and flowers, and also of a small monkey of the same sort. The two little creatures were overjoyed at meeting, and at once rolled themselves together into a ball, as if determined

[1] Called by the Singhalese *Neela-cobeya*.

that henceforth no one should separate them; so the two were slung, with other goods and chattels, from a stick over a man's shoulder, and so were carried to St Thomas's College, where they received the names of "Boots" and "Betty," and lived happily together, till one sad day when Boots unhappily choked himself by too greedily devouring the hard seeds of a jak fruit. After that poor little Betty had to console herself with her human friends, and was always specially devoted to the Bishop.

A very strange thing concerning the monkey tribes is, that the bodies of those which must surely die are never found. Whether the survivors give them decent burial, I cannot say, but both in India and in Ceylon there is a saying to the effect that the man who sees a dead monkey, a nest of the Padda-bird,[1] or a straight cocoa-palm, will never die. To this list might be added a dead elephant; for, strange to say, these huge creatures likewise contrive so to dispose of their dead, that, with the exception of some which have died from bullet-wounds, their remains are never found in the jungle.

[1] *Ardeola leucoptera.*

CHAPTER V.

THE CRUISE OF THE CASTLE JERMYN.

Hedgehog-grass—Strychnine—Snake temples—Kalpitiya—Orchilla dye —*Bêche de mer*—Edible birds' nests—Cashew-nuts—Karative salt-pans—Puttalam—Fish-market—Roman Catholic fishermen—St Anna—Negombo—Banyan-trees—Cinnamon-collectors.

Again passing through a short connecting-canal, we crossed the mouth of the Dedroo-Oya, a fine wide stream, calm as the ocean into which it flowed, and contrasting strangely with the majestic green wave which ever and anon rose as if by magic to fall with a thunderous roar in a cataract of dazzling surf.

We never missed any opportunity of landing to collect whatever treasures we might chance to find, of marsh or jungle, river or sea; so here we landed on the sands and picked up—not shells, but a great variety of seeds, large and small, rough and smooth, dropped into the river by forest-trees and creeping plants (chiefly gigantic beans), and thus carried to the ocean, to be thence thrown back on the land far from their birthplace.

But the most curious objects in our collection of seeds were the large circular heads which contain those of the aptly named hedgehog-grass, or *Spinifex squarrosus*. These are

light balls, often from ten to twelve inches in diameter, composed of long spines radiating from the seed-bearing centre. When these are mature they drop from the plant, and the wind blows them like wheels for miles along the shore, or maybe across rivers and lagoons, dropping many seeds on their way, but retaining some to the last, and thus carrying the first promise of future fertility to the newest and most arid sandbanks, which it binds together much in the same way as does the abundant lilac convolvulus.

A very marked feature of the vegetation along the coast is a handsome tree[1] with luxuriant dark foliage and most inviting-looking fruit like golden oranges. But woe be to the rash lips which would approach those tempting fruits, for within them, embedded in pulp, lie the seeds which yield strychnine, the deadliest of poisons! Somewhat on homœopathic principles, some of the Tamil coolies are said actually to accustom themselves to eat a small portion of a seed every day, not as an intoxicant (though it is said that in India these seeds are sometimes used for that purpose in the adulteration of arrack), but as an antidote against a possible bite from a cobra.

Strange to say, the only other member of the strychnine family[2] yields seeds which are invaluable in districts where the water is muddy, for by rubbing the inside of the chatty with one of these all impurities are very soon precipitated, and the water remains quite clear. Nevertheless, the part of wisdom in jungle travelling is NEVER to drink water which has not been both boiled and filtered.

Leaving the Dedroo-Oya we passed into a smaller stream,

[1] *Strychnos nux-vomica.*

[2] *Strychnos potatorum*, called by the Tamils *tettan-cotta*, and by the Singhalese *ingini.*

and then into a succession of lagoons with sandy banks clothed with a plant resembling our own broom in the profusion of its yellow blossoms. For a while our water-way lay through very desolate country. No more luxuriant ferns or tall quivering reeds, but eerie-looking screw-pines, with their scarlet fruit peeping from odd bunches of sword-like leaves, and their labyrinth of strangely contorted roots. These, and strange cactii from fifteen to twenty-five feet in height, with yellow blossoms tipping their thorny arms, stood out black against the red sunset sky, a most uncanny-looking scene. Here, however, we anchored for the night, and found compensation for the poverty of vegetation in a delightful absence of bloodthirsty mosquitoes, from whose attacks we generally suffered considerably.

Emerging from the river Moondalani, we entered the long wide lake or gobb, which eventually enters the sea above Kalpitiya, and here saw great flocks of white cranes and Padda-birds. Unlike the graceful white bird so called in India, the Ceylonese Padda-bird has brown wings and back, only showing white when flying. Dark glossy lotus-leaves floated on the shining waters, with blossoms silvery, golden, roseate, and azure, and in those dainty cups bright dewdrops glistened like fairy gems.

For about five miles we sailed on this calm peaceful lake, then passed into the usual chain of bits of rivers connected by short canals. We landed in a lovely jungle, and brought back loads of flowers to decorate our boat-home, and bright scarlet and black seeds of the Olinda, a jungle creeper; but all these treasures were gathered at the cost of many sharp bites from ants, and tears from cruel thorns which pierced our thickest boots and tore our dresses, although mine was of good strong serge.

The boatmen (ever on the alert to find wayside treasures for us) brought us curious seeds of the Naga-darana or "snake's fangs," so called from having sharp curved points like teeth, which inflict a very painful scratch. These, together with little bowls of milk, are offered to snakes by persons who wish to propitiate them; for although serpent-worship no longer holds so prominent a place in Ceylon as it did of yore when the Isle was described as Naga-dwipa, "The Snake's Isle," quite as often as Lanka-dwipa, "The Happy Isle," the old reverence for the Naga is by no means extinct.[1] Till quite recently there was a very ancient snake-temple on the small isle of Nainativoe near Jaffna, where live cobras were devoutly tended by reverent priests and priestesses. Those slippery gods still reign in the cobra temple on Iranative, the twin's isle, a little farther south; but their shrine is said to have been seriously damaged by the great cyclone in November 1884, which swept the whole coast with such appalling fury that on one small island alone 2500 palm-trees were uprooted, and about 800 head of cattle and sheep were killed.

I heard of another snake temple at Badulla, where, so recently as 1850, my informant had seen live serpents gliding about at large and reverently worshipped. At another temple in the same town there is a stone on which is sculptured a short thick serpent with a head at each end, which stone is said to possess magic virtue in healing broken bones.[2]

In Southern India persons suffering from leprosy or ophthalmia, or who are childless, believe these woes to be the

[1] See chapter xii., Tree and Serpent Worship.

[2] For kindred serpent-lore in Scotland, see 'In the Hebrides,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming, page 54. Published by Chatto & Windus.

penalty for having killed a cobra, either in this life or in some previous state of existence. So they take earth from a serpent's hole, and therewith rub the leprous spot, or if possible they make pilgrimage to a serpent-shrine, and lying down prostrate on the ground, wriggle round the shrine several times, imitating the gliding motion of a serpent. They then present as their offering a small image of Siva, with a five-headed snake forming his canopy.

Doubtless in Ceylon also, a lingering belief in the supernatural power of the serpent is by no means extinct; but the special reverence accorded to the cobra, even by Singhalese Buddhists, is accounted for by the legend of its having, by expanding its uplifted hood, sheltered Buddha from the scorching sun when he lay down to rest. Hence the images of Buddha are frequently canopied by a five or seven-headed hooded snake.

Among the various traces of this strange worship, one which greatly impressed me was a remarkable rock-sculpture at Mehintale (near Anuradhapura), representing a great five-headed cobra rising from a dark pool near the summit of the mountain. There was something strangely weird in this most reverend creature with his expanded hood, guarding the pool on which floated such pure white water-lilies.

Happily the Kandyans hold the cobra only in honour, under the belief that he is beneficent to man. All other venomous snakes are not only killed, but hung up by the neck, partly as a mark of indignity, but also to avert the danger of any passer-by walking on them unawares, and possibly being scratched by their poison-fangs. If a fire is available they cremate the corpse to ensure its not reviving.

But in the maritime provinces the traces of the ancient Naga-worship are not confined to the cobra, for Singhalese and Tamils alike are extremely averse to killing any serpent. If possible, they coax them into covered wicker-baskets, and float them down some stream, trusting that they may land in safety elsewhere. One of our friends, who occupied a charming house near the mouth of the Kelani river, mentioned, as a serious drawback to the situation, the number of these frail arks containing cobras, ticpolongas, and other deadly snakes, which the natives reverentially launched at various points up the river, and which the eddying currents too frequently landed among the great clumps of bamboo and overhanging shrubs, whence they invaded the garden at pleasure.

The professional snake-charmers, who go about with a basket full of these wriggling reptiles for exhibition, are all Tamils, but some of the Singhalese are said to do a little domestic serpent-taming. A very curious instance of this was recorded by Major Skinner in 1858, at which time a certain rich man living near Negombo, and who liked to keep his money in his own house, protected it by keeping tame cobras gliding about as other folk keep watch-dogs. These discriminating creatures were warranted only to molest would-be thieves, and never injured any of the family. This was said to be by no means a unique case.

Though I cannot say that cobras seem to me attractive pets, I confess to some sympathy with those natives who make friends with the useful rat-snakes who take up their abode in the thatch, and do their best to clear the house of vermin. These are occasionally so tame as to come when summoned to share a family meal!

Saturday night found us on a swampy lake, bordered with thickets of great tree-cacti of several sorts. Again the sun sank in fiery red, and the weird arms of the cacti seemed black as ebony against that scarlet glow, which rapidly gave place to the briefest twilight, during which flocks of wild-fowl rose from their feeding-grounds on the quiet lake.

In this strange spot we spent a peaceful Sunday, and on the morrow a short sail brought us to the town of Puttalam, eighty-five miles from Colombo. It is a large village on the flat shores of the shallow gulf, and the country inland is likewise flat, with low thorny jungle and swampy rice-fields, sluggish streams and crocodile-haunted tanks. We wandered for some hours on the shore and in the native bazaar, then again set sail and travelled northward all night up the long sea-lake, till we reached Kalpitiya, formerly called Calpentyn, where a dreary old fort tells of the days when the Dutch ruled in the Isle.

Here, as elsewhere in Ceylon, I was struck by the remarkable ugliness of the mosque, so inferior to even the humblest of those in India. These have no tall minarets, nor does the call of the muezzin summon the faithful to pray; indeed, though the Moormen (*i.e.*, the Mohammedans) are a very important body in Ceylon, I have never seen them pause in work at sunrise and sunset to observe the hours of prayer, which is so marked a practice of their brethren in other lands. It is, however, worthy of note, that during the period of wholesale nominal conversions under the Portuguese and Dutch rule, there is no record of a single Moorman having professed the creed of the conqueror.

Mohammedanism is, however, so unobtrusive here, that I noted with special interest the lights which at nightfall

gleamed on all the tombs near the mosque, and which we were told are kindled every Tuesday and Thursday night in memory of the dead.

Nature supplemented this poetic illumination, for the water was brilliantly phosphorescent, and every ripple that broke upon the shore, or in the wake of boats or canoes, flashed in lovely light like gleaming steel. Of the many infinitesimal creatures to whom we were indebted for this soft radiance, one outshone all its fellows—namely, a water-gnat, which skimmed lightly over the surface like a marine meteor, leaving a trail of fairy-like green light. This fascinating display was repeated night after night, the most vivid of all being on the lake at Negombo, where the phosphorescence took the form of little balls like white electric light, and when my bath was filled in the dark cabin, I found I was sitting in luminous water. That night the air was full of electricity, forked and sheet lightning by turns illumined the dark heaven, and I wondered whether the sea could be affected by the same cause.

Yet another detail in the varied illumination was supplied by the blazing torches of many fishermen, torches of plaited palm-leaf, by the light of which they spear fish with a seven-pronged fork, or sometimes capture them by dropping a basket over them, as, bewildered by the glare, they lie still on the bed of the shallow lake. Close to us, secured by a huge wooden anchor, lay a very picturesque vessel laden with rice and salt. Her crew of Moormen spent most of the night monotonously chanting verses of the Koran, which did not soothe our slumbers.

On the morrow the Bishop held service, first in English and afterwards in Tamil, in a solid but exceedingly ugly old Dutch church; the English-speaking congregation consist-

ing chiefly of the "Burgher" descendants of those same Dutch colonists.

In the evening we landed on a small island clothed with dense jungle and masses of exquisite blue blossoms of the clitoria. We watched with much interest the movements of a sea-snake putting up its head to breathe; but we were careful to keep at a safe distance, many sea-snakes being venomous, though we were assured that all those living in fresh water are harmless.

On the beach natives were filling sacks with a gelatinous sea-weed which answers the purpose of isinglass, while others were collecting off the rocks and trees a pale-grey lichen like tattered ribbons, called orchilla,[1] from which a rich blue dye is obtained. This lichen has long been imported to England from the coast of Zanzibar and South America, but it is only within the last quarter of a century that its existence in Ceylon has been known: once recognised, however, it has been so eagerly collected that, being a slow-growing plant, it has been greatly reduced in quantity, and the annual export has fallen from 1200 cwt. to about 450 cwt.

Here and there on the shore were piles of bleached corals, such as many a British collector would prize; but which here were only waiting to be burnt, and so converted into lime for chewing with betel and areca (that most obnoxious habit which makes the whole population seem to be constantly spitting blood!)

Through the very clear shallow water we could see many ugly fat slugs, about six inches in length, and were told that these are the far-famed *bêche de mer* or trepang (*holothurians*), so greatly prized by the Chinese that a colony of Chinamen

[1] *Roccella Montagnei.*

have settled in the north of the Isle, near Jaffna, on purpose to superintend the fishing for these slugs and curing them. They are found all along the north-west coast, in water from one foot to eight fathoms in depth, and are systematically captured by native divers. They are partially cooked in iron pans over a slow fire, and are then dried in the sun, and finally smoked over a fire of green wood.

In the hands of a Chinese cook they make excellent and most nutritious gelatinous soup; but they require careful preparation and very slow boiling, and they are not appreciated in Ceylon any more than another delicately gelatinous dainty, dear to the *gourmet* of China—namely, edible birds' nests, which are found in considerable quantities in the darkest recesses of large gloomy caves in the Central and Southern Provinces of Ceylon, both on the sea-coast and far inland, chiefly in the latter, in the Morowa Korle, whence they are collected by Chinamen, who have purchased from Government the exclusive right to this harvest.

The swift,[1] which builds these curious nests, is a small dark-grey bird. The proportion of isinglass in its nest is considerably less than that obtained in Java, Borneo, and elsewhere, so that although the birds are numerous in Ceylon, the value of the nests as an article of commerce is small, not exceeding 4000 rupees a-year.

Short as was our stay at Kalpitiya, many kind people—Tamil, Singhalese, and Burgher—brought us miscellaneous gifts,—the dear little baby mongoose aforesaid, both land and water turtles, shells, corals, fragrant limes strung together to form necklaces of honour, and strangely fascinating blossoms of the cocoa-nut and the areca palm, which I can only describe as somewhat resembling bunches of the richest

[1] *Collocalia francica.*

waxy wheat, vastly magnified and carved in ivory. These are much used in Singhalese decoration, though involving a prodigal sacrifice of the precious nuts. Less wasteful, but also less graceful, were the plaited palm-leaves wherewith our boat-home was further honourably adorned, while there seemed no end to the ingenious oddities in the form of miniature lanterns, parrots, birds of paradise, &c., all fashioned by plaiting strips of palm-leaf.

Amongst the gifts which to me had all the charm of novelty was a basket of Cashew-nuts,[1] an excellent kidney-shaped nut, which grows in the most eccentric fashion outside of a yellow pear-shaped fruit, hanging on to one end of it. The fruit itself is of an acrid astringent flavour; but in some countries a strong spirit is distilled from the fermented juice. Here, however, only the nuts are eaten. When raw, although nice, they are very unwholesome, and the shell contains an acrid caustic oil, which is almost poisonous, and stains one's fingers, so they are always roasted ere they are brought to table, and are excellent.

What with fruit, flowers, and living creatures, our limited space was being rapidly filled up.

Next morning we started early on the return voyage to Puttalam, but lost the morning breeze while halting at the Karative Salt-pans, so the crew had a long day of hard work rowing in the sun. These salt-works, with those at Puttalam, Chilaw, and other points, are the special industry of this district; the salt being obtained from the great calm lagoon, whose waters, owing to ceaseless evaporation in the burning sun, are very much more briny than those of the ocean by which it is fed. The lagoon is nearly thirty miles in length, with a breadth of from four to eight miles.

[1] *Anacardium occidentale.*

As salt is deposited more rapidly by still water than by that which is subject to tidal movement, a large part of the lake is enclosed by a mud embankment, where the waters are held captive for a given period, after which they are led by small ditches into shallow enclosures or pans, where evaporation goes on still more rapidly, and the brine is left till it becomes further condensed. This saturated solution is then again transferred to another series of shallow enclosures, where it is left till the salt is precipitated in snowy crystals, forming a glittering crust of from two to three inches in thickness.

Upwards of 300,000 cwt. is sometimes thus obtained in this neighbourhood in the course of a season, though at other times not one-third of this amount may be collected. The quantity eventually stored depends greatly on the sun, for the harvest is as precarious as that of kelp or of hay, or whatever else depends on fickle weather; and the most promising deposits vanish literally "like snow-drifts in thaw," should unseasonable rains chance to fall.

This work (which in this district gives employment to upwards of a thousand persons) is chiefly carried on by Moormen working under Government supervision, for the salt trade, here as in Hindoostan, is a Government monopoly, and one which forms a very important item in the revenue, bringing in an annual average of upwards of 800,000 rupees (*i.e.*, about £80,000). The cost of manufacture being only about threepence per cwt., and the price paid to the salt contractors only about four rupees per ton, while retail dealers pay about 47 rupees for the same weight, it follows that Government profits to the extent of about 900 per cent.

Curiously enough, it is proved that whereas the annual

consumption of salt in India is less than 6 lb. per head, that in Ceylon is just double, averaging 12 lb. per head. Whether this implies a peculiarly strong craving for salt in these islanders, I know not; but its importance is so fully recognised, that on various occasions, both the Dutch and the Portuguese contrived to bring the kings of Kandy (*i.e.*, of the mountain province in the heart of the Isle) to terms, by blockading every route by which salt could be carried from the sea-coast to the mountains.

The price of the article of course varies enormously with the distance to which it has to be carried. To fish-curers on the coast it is now supplied almost gratis, with a view to the encouragement of this as an island industry, instead of, as at present, importing large quantities of salt fish from India. In the towns on the seaboard to which salt is conveyed by boat, the addition of freight is not very serious; but in inland districts, which can only be supplied by toilsome bullock-cart and coolie transport, the price is enormously increased; and in the hill districts, the difficulty and cost of transport is so great, that the salt which at the salt-pans sells for two cents per lb., may fetch from one to two rupees in the mountains. It is hoped that ere long a branch railway may greatly facilitate this traffic.

Besides these salt-works on the west coast, there are others at Hambantotte in the Southern Province, and smaller ones on the north and east sea-coast.

Sunday proved anything but a day of rest for the Bishop, who had come to Puttalam in order to consecrate the new church, and who in the course of the day held all possible services in English and in Tamil, beginning with a baptism in the early morning, and ending with a confirmation in the evening. Amongst the candidates were several very smart

Tamil ladies, who wore short-sleeved jackets of bright-coloured silk, and muslin skirts which by no means veiled their bare brown feet and ankles. According to oriental custom their large muslin veils duly concealed their faces till the moment of confirmation, when the veils were thrown back.

We were very glad to end the evening by a stroll on the sea-beach, watching a lovely sunset; but we were assured that this would not at all times be so pleasant, as in one monsoon shoals of jelly-fish are washed ashore, and lie rotting in the sun, poisoning the whole atmosphere. A pleasanter gift of the sea is the oyster crop, which here is said to be excellent. We passed through the fish-market, and saw a great variety of fishes—some odd, some beautiful; but all these we saw in larger numbers a few days later at Chilaw, a very pretty village lying between the sea and a river, only separated from one another by a very narrow belt of sand. The coast there is infested by sharks, and monstrous saw-fish, fully fifteen feet in length, were sometimes captured.

In that market we saw young sharks of three distinct species, saw-fish, dog-fish, cuttle-fish, and many more; some of the most vivid scarlet with sky-blue spots, some scarlet shaded with crimson, others mauve and silvery grey, like the doves of the sea. There was every shade of colour, in every conceivable combination and variety of marking, with odd scales and fins. In the fish world, as elsewhere, the gaudiest are by no means the best. Those most in favour for the table are the seir, soles, mullet, whiting, mackerel, dories, and good little sardines.

But for gorgeous colouring we turn to the family of parrot-fishes, of lustrous green, gold, purple, or crimson, varied by bands of the richest scarlet, grey, and yellow, the whole

being toned by cross stripes of velvety black. Then there are great fire-fish, of vivid flame colour, and Red Sea perch, of dazzling scarlet. One lovely fish, about eighteen inches long,[1] is specially sacred to Buddha, being clothed in his colours of lovely gold barred with rich brown sienna. The red pahaya is also brilliant red tinted with gold. It grows to about two feet in length, and is excellent to eat. The basket parrot has a green back, fading into yellow, with yellow fins; but the whole is covered with straight lines and cross patches, giving the exact effect of wicker-work.

A very handsome parrot-fish,[2] about two feet in length, has a dove-grey body with black spots, fins brown, with rows of dainty little black spots; the ventral fin is edged with delicate green, while that on the back is edged with scarlet. The tail is scarlet with a white edge; the eye is bright gold, set in a golden head with blue-green stripes. Altogether one almost fancies that a ray of prismatic light must rest upon it. Then there is the worm parrot,[3] so called from a fancied resemblance to the worm which bores holes in palm-trees. Its body is of a dark claret colour, crossed by five bars of delicate yellow, while each separate scale is edged with green. Bands of yellow, edged with pale blue, meander over the head.

When one hears of a "squirrel parrot,"[4] one naturally expects to see something grey or brown; but this is by no means the case. It is a gorgeous fish, about eighteen inches in length, of beautifully shaded green, with longitudinal stripes and dots of crimson: its head is likewise green and crimson, and its tail-fin striped scarlet and gold on a green ground. The pumpkin parrot,[5] which averages three feet in

[1] *The Dewe* (or holy) *Boraloowah.* [2] *Ratoo-Girawah.*
[3] *Panoo-Girawah.* [4] *Lena-Girawah.* [5] *Laboo-Girawah.*

length, has a blue-green back and bright-green tail, grey underside, and yellow head, with sienna fins; but it is covered all over with a honeycomb pattern of bright yellow.

A very lady-like-looking member of this family is the Balistes, robed in delicate silver; its eyes are bright golden, with large black pupil. The green tulip parrot[1] is also a dainty little fish, only about six inches in length, apparelled in lovely shaded green; while the cocoa-nut sparrow (*Pol-Kitchyah*) is a small creature, with head, tail, fins, and cross-bars of yellow on a claret-coloured ground.

Perhaps the most marvellously variegated of all these creatures is the flower parrot,[2] which chiefly frequents the coral-reefs off the south of the Isle. Its lustrous robe has horizontal bands of silver, blue, crimson, bright-green, and dark-green, crossed by black bands and patches of yellow. The fins are straw-coloured, the head has crimson and bright-green stripes radiating from the eye.

Even the excellent herring of Ceylon[3] displays an oriental love of colour, for its silvery body is striped with red, and some of its fins are yellow, while the others are dark steel-grey. But the triumph of fish millinery is reserved for a lovely, very rare perch, dressed in silvery grey, with tail, fins, and crown of the head of vivid gold, just tipped with velvety black.

Another radiant butterfly of the deep is the Malkotah, which is apparelled in green satin striped with scarlet, its fins and tail being also scarlet.

But for oddity nothing can excel the various members of the Chetodon family or "Moon-fish," as they are called by the Singhalese, because of their globular form. One is just a ball of bright golden yellow, with glittering yellow eyes

[1] *Mil-Talapat-Girawah.* [2] *Mal-Girawah.* [3] *Pookoorowah.*

and enormous brown fins. Another has a yellow body with curved lines of purple; black-and-gold tail and fins, and a black band on the face. One little gem about four inches in diameter is silvery grey, shaded with bands of darker grey, and silvery eyes. Another equally tiny is of bright gold, with a blue back and gold dorsal fin.

There are also crabs innumerable, including some which are brilliantly tinted. They are of all shapes and sizes, from the largest edible crabs down to little tiny hermits, which scamper about the shore in thousands, hiding during the heat of the day under the cool shade of the marine convolvulus, each tenanting some empty shell which it has selected from the multitude which strew the beach. But I must not linger too long over the wonders of the fish-market and of the sea-shore, which so specially attracted us at Chilaw, from being so close to and parallel with the banks of the river where our boat lay anchored.

Here we were taken to see some fine wood-carving in the Roman Catholic church, where we were told the Sunday congregation averaged 900 persons; for here, as elsewhere in Ceylon, a large proportion of the fishers and many of the coast population are Roman Catholics—descendants of the Portuguese converts. Chapels are numerous, all built by the people themselves, and devout congregations attend Mass daily at 4 A.M. The fishers give their priest a tithe of their daily catch, and in stormy weather will never put to sea till he has sprinkled the boats with holy water. Not one boat puts to sea on Sunday—a deference for the day in honourable contrast with the enormous amount of Sunday labour exacted at the ports where foreign vessels call, and where the toil of shipping and unshipping cargo goes on without intermission.

Having been converted by the Portuguese, the Roman Catholics in Ceylon have ever continued subject to the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa, whence also their priests have been chiefly supplied. The French and Italian priests and vicars-apostolic sent from Rome have found less favour with the people, who have shown themselves nowise disposed to accept the dogma of Papal infallibility, more especially since the Pope decreed that in September 1884 the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa should cease, and the Goanese clergy should no longer be competent to dispense the holy sacraments, unless they would subject themselves to the Pope's representative—a change of allegiance to which they very seriously objected.

The strife born of those disputes has been most unedifying. Thus we were shown an island near Negombo (Dhuwa Isle) to which some notion of special sanctity attaches, and there the different orders have had serious conflicts as to which should say Mass first. The year before our visit, thousands had assembled, quite prepared for a free fight in support of their respective spiritual leaders; but the British authorities having got wind of their intentions, a body of police took possession of the chapel, and ordered which should take precedence. Afterwards the others held their service, although greatly incensed at the preference shown to their rivals.

I heard much of the miracle-plays performed on Good Friday in a building adjoining the chapel. The room was chemically darkened, leaving only sufficient light to distinguish three great crucifixes. All other figures were real. The Blessed Virgin was personated by a Singhalese woman. Afterwards an image representing the dead Christ was carried on a bier through the streets of the city, which

were lined with thousands of kneeling women, all dressed in black, and wailing aloud. At Chilaw, on Palm Sunday, processions of large images of our Lord riding the ass, and of the twelve Apostles, are paraded on wheels, just as the Hindoos parade their gods. At Jaffna the processions might well be mistaken for that of Jaggernaut's cars, and no heathen idol could be more repulsive than are the images of many of the Christian saints as here displayed.

About half-way between Puttalam and Kalpitiya lies a village named Talavillu, which has attained to great notoriety through certain miraculous cures imputed to St Anna, to whom a sick man vowed to give all his goods in case he should recover from dire illness. He did recover, and his little property proved a nest-egg for the accumulation of a great sum of similar offerings. So a large church speedily replaced the original humble shrine, and now crowds of pilgrims of all faiths, to the number of 20,000, assemble there for a great annual fair in the month of July. Not only Roman Catholics, but Hindoos and Buddhists, pay their vows at the shrine of St Anna, who receives gifts of all sorts. We were told that a waiter in one of the hotels had just presented her with a magnificent green satin dress and golden crown. The pilgrims travel from afar in crowded boats and heavily laden carts, and are a cause of considerable anxiety to the authorities, from the fear of their causing or spreading disease.[1]

[1] Letters from Puttalam, on July 19, 1889, tell of the town being invaded by the usual groups of pilgrims, mendicants, devotees, soothsayers, musicians, &c.—men and women of all classes, and of all the different races which people the Isle, crowding to worship at the shrine of St Anna, irrespective of their various creeds, greatly to the advantage of the owners of ferry-boats plying between Puttalam and Ettalai.

But by July 26 cholera had broken out, and three deaths having

Ceylon has no lack of modern miracles, so called, nor of faithful believers therein. Thus, had we been curious in such matters, we might have visited a church five miles from Negombo, in which lay a girl whose life was said to be one long trance, but who on every Friday imagined that she endured all the agonies of the crucifixion, and who certainly did seem to be enduring indescribable pain, though heretics failed to believe that, as was alleged, drops of blood truly trickled from her hands and feet. At first the good old village priest declared himself unable to express any opinion on this strange case; but, after a visit from his bishop, it was declared to be a true miracle, whereupon thousands flocked to see her, and enriched the chapel by their offerings.

Leaving pleasant Chilaw, we rowed back, in glorious moonlight (oh so beautiful as seen from beneath the dark overarching fronds of tall cocoa-palms!) to the lovely Luna-Oya, and there anchored, that we might get full enjoyment of the early morning light on its beautiful foliage and tangled creepers, and on the wealth of reeds, acanthus, and innumerable water-plants on its sedgy shores. The men camped on shore, rigging up the brown sail as their tent, and kindling a bright fire beneath the trees.

Again, with the dawn, we rejoiced in all the voices of the wakening jungle life,—monkeys and jolly old wanderoos, parrots, kingfishers, barbets, jungle-fowl,—notes of all sorts, harsh and liquid, the most attractive being those of a cheery

occurred, the festival was stopped by order of the Government officers, pilgrims being forbidden to enter Puttalam, and recommended to return to their homes. A hospital was established at St Anna's, and shelters for wayfarers stricken with illness were organised along the route, in charge of properly qualified attendants. A medical officer was also stationed at Kalpitiya, whose duty it was to see the various bands of pilgrims safely started on their homeward way.

black-and-white bird, which Europeans call a robin, because it has something of the friendly demeanour to human beings which endears our own little red-breast.

All day long we sailed or rowed, and at sunset neared the village of Maravilla; but catching sight of a crowd of natives preparing decorations in honour of the Bishop's visit, we pretended not to have arrived, and, turning back, anchored for the night near a grand old banyan-tree, amid whose dark foliage flashed fire-flies innumerable.

Immediately after early coffee, M. de Soyza, the fine old village *moodliar*, came to fetch us, and showed us over his splendidly kept cocoa-palm estate, watered by the aid of a steam-engine, an outlay well repaid by the luxuriant growth of the trees, young ones about eleven years of age having fronds of from 20 to 25 feet in length. On an average, each full-grown tree yields twenty nuts six times a-year.

These fine fronds, torn into shreds and plaited, figured largely in the decorations at the landing-place and at church, mingling with the large fan-shaped leaves and rich glossy-brown fruit of the palmyra-palm, the scarlet screw-pine, and curiously woven pendant birds' nests, the general effect being very light and pretty.

The congregation here being all Singhalese, the Bishop of course conducted the service in that language (to me as incomprehensible as Tamil). The interest centred in the baptism of two adults, converts from Buddhism.

In the afternoon we resumed our voyage, sailing down-stream between beautifully wooded banks, where we saw several great ungainly kabragoyas, and numerous small lovely lizards. We attempted to capture a bright-green tree-snake, about four feet long, which was twined round a branch, with a crested bird dead in its mouth; but at our

approach it dropped into the water and swam to shore. Though not venomous, it is dreaded by the islanders, because of its habit of darting at the eyes of man or bird.

A sunset, in which every gorgeous colour blended, was succeeded by an after-glow still more exquisite; and ere its brilliancy had faded, the moon shone gloriously, its light blending with that of the sheet-lightning, while the glaring torches of men fishing cast long fiery reflections, and showers of sparks, as the fishers passed in and out beneath the overhanging branches of the dark trees.

We anchored for the night where the placid waters of the Ging-Oya mingle with those of the Maha-Oya, and together flow silently into the ocean, the point of union being marked only by the upheaval every other minute of the majestic green wave which curls and breaks in dazzling surf and with thunderous roar—a vision of lovely peace, blended with resistless force.

Sailing in the early dawn, we passed from the calm river to a still calmer canal, and thence into the Lake Negombo, where we again anchored beside the picturesque native town and fishing-village, with all its variety of boats, most fascinating to a sketcher. A hearty welcome awaited us in a pleasant bungalow between the sea and the lake, and close to an old fort—commenced by the Portuguese, and completed by the Dutch—close also to a magnificent banyan-tree with innumerable stems, one of the finest I have ever seen. Beneath its shadow sat groups of Singhalese men and women, waiting their summons on business to the court-house, within the old fort.

Truth to tell, banyan-trees, beautiful as they always must be, do not very commonly attain to the gigantic size of our Indian visions. We have all been from our cradles im-

bued with descriptions of the sacred fig, which spreads her arms,

> "Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
> The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
> About the mother-tree, a pillared shade
> High overarched, and echoing walks between"—

that mystic grove where Milton tells how the parents of our race found refuge; and so many travellers have brought home measurements of the amazing extent of ground covered by the multitudinous offspring of one parent stem, that stay-at-home folk suppose such trees are to be met with at every turn.

I am sorry to say that this is so far from being the case, that in the course of very extensive travels I can only recollect one tree in Nananu, a small island off Viti Levu (*i.e.*, Great Fiji [1]), and two or three in India, to compare with this one at Negombo. Sad to say, in the districts of Ceylon where the forest has been ruthlessly cleared to make way for coffee, I was shown the sites whence trees, which must have been wellnigh as grand as this, had been felled and burnt, and in place of their stately beauty and delicious shade, I saw only dull little bushes beneath a scorching sun.

Of existing trees, perhaps the most accessible specimen for the easy-going tourist is that at Dumdum near Calcutta; but for majestic grandeur probably none can compare with the famous banyan on an island in the Nerbudda river about ten miles from Baroda, which numbers three hundred and fifty great stems and three thousand lesser ones. Apparently a good many more have been washed away by floods, but even now this vast colony covers an area two thousand feet in circumference, while the overhanging

[1] At Home in Fiji. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by William Blackwood & Sons.

branches extend over a far wider space, and are continually putting forth fresh perpendicular shoots and masses of brown fibre, ready still further to enlarge their border. Of course the Hindoos (who reverence all large trees as the dwelling-place of a god, and to whom every leaf of the sacred fig is precious) assemble here in vast concourse, and at certain great festivals as many as seven thousand human beings sometimes find shelter under its broad shadow, besides troops of monkeys, and flocks of great bats, parrots, pigeons, and pea-fowl, which find a safe home in its sacred branches.

Such trees as these are, however, quite exceptional. Even in India an average family group rarely exceeds twenty or thirty main trunks, and more slender pillars at intervals; with a beard-like network of pendant offshoots stretching earthward to meet the great masses of bare roots, all twisted and interlaced, which seem like some mighty race of serpents writhing in endless contortions.

It is necessary to remember that there are three distinct families of the great clan fig-tree. These huge banyans are the Ficus indica (and it was beneath the shadow of one of these that the Hindoo god Vishnu was born). The still more sacred *Peepul* (as it is called in India), or *Bo* (which is the contraction for *Bodinwahanse*, as the tree is called in Ceylon), is the Ficus religiosa, and it was beneath its cool shade that Gautama sat absorbed in meditation till he attained his Buddha-hood, or state of perfect wisdom; consequently, wherever Buddhism has reigned, even where, as throughout India, it has been superseded by Brahmanism, this tree is held in deepest reverence.[1]

[1] For singularly practical proof of this, in business matters, see 'In the Himalayas and on Indian Plains,' p. 80. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by Chatto & Windus.

The third great member of clan fig is the FICUS ELASTICA, or India-rubber tree, of which it would be difficult to find nobler representatives than the magnificent avenue outside the Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya, near Kandy. Its large leathery leaf is familiar to most folk as a hothouse shrub, and it bears a small bright crimson seed. The sacred Bo-tree bears a small scarlet fruit like a tiny fig, and its curiously thin heart-shaped leaf ends in a long point, which serves as a conduit for trickling rain-drops, which, after a shower, hang glittering in the sunlight. Like those of the aspen, the leaves of this "tree of wisdom" are for ever quivering with every breath of air.

Long before sunrise we found our way to the palm-fringed shore, to enjoy the rare luxury of a delicious bath in the warm sea—rare, because there are so few places on these shores where we could feel safe from sharks; but here the water lies so clear above the firm yellow sand, that sharks seem afraid to approach, so our enjoyment of the perfect morning was unalloyed.

But the subsequent delight of lying idly at rest in the verandah during the noonday heat, was tempered by alarming stories of the terrible results of such indulgence should the breeze happen to be blowing from the north-west, in which case it is known as the "Along-shore" or "Land" Wind, which, blowing over feverish Indian jungles, arrives here hot and dry, and shrivels up whatever it touches. Half an hour of this delicious but treacherous breeze blowing on a sleeper, or even on a person lying at rest, often proves worse than a sunstroke, and is quite as permanent in its effects. Animals suffer from it as severely as human beings, horses and deer being often crippled with rheumatism, or even blind from this cause. Its effect on vegetation is also

most hurtful, and even furniture shrinks and splits under its baneful influence.

On Sunday the Bishop held morning and evening service in the old Dutch fort, the congregation consisting chiefly of the Burgher descendants of those early colonists, with a sprinkling of more picturesque Singhalese with their combs and *comboys.* The services were hearty, the singing good, and the great fronds of the tall palms quivered in the cool light breeze as we looked down on the bright blue sea—a peaceful, pleasant scene.

The old fort suggests strange visions of trading under difficulties, inasmuch as the main purpose of its existence, and of its strong garrison, was for the protection of the cinnamon trade, and to supply military escorts for each of the large bodies of the native cinnamon-peelers, who were sent into the jungles all around Negombo to collect the spice so dear to our grandmothers, and so largely used in the manufacture of chocolate and church incense. Little did those gentle dames and peaceful worshippers dream of the risks run by the very poor, almost naked, Singhalese cinnamon-collectors —of attack not only by divers wild beasts, but also by warlike Kandyan troops, and of the toil and danger incurred in their service.

About the year 1770, a large extent of the jungle near Negombo was taken into cultivation for the growth of cinnamon only, when, as I have already mentioned, such stringent laws were enacted to secure the Government monopoly of the precious spice, that flogging was the penalty for any injury to a shrub, while death awaited the wretch who destroyed a tree in the Government plantations, or even helped himself to a little bark.

One of the objects of interest near Negombo is a cocoa-

nut palm with several heads, a growth so rare that we were taken up the lake to see it; but found it as hideous as are most other deformities. The stem rises singly to the usual height; but where the crown of fruit and fronds ought to be, it divides into nine white stems, each bearing a misshapen bunch of leaves only. I heard of another deformed palm near Belligama in the neighbourhood of Galle. That one has a triple crown. I have also seen a hydra-headed palm on one of the Fijian Isles, where it was equally prized by the natives on account of its singularity.

I found a more attractive object for pencil and brush in the majestic banyan-tree, which claimed all my available time at charming Negombo, to which we bade adieu with infinite regret, my companions returning to Colombo by land, while I preferred returning by water, and sailing down the lake in clear moonlight. It was an evening much to be remembered, on account of the wonderful phosphorescence of the water, the brilliancy of forked and sheet lightning, and the utter stillness, broken only by the deep growling of distant thunder. There was also something of novelty in finding myself alone with a crew of Singhalese, of whose language I scarcely knew six words!

We anchored at Tarracoolie, a very pretty spot with rich foliage and deep reflections, of which I secured an early sketch, then once more sailed by lovely river and canal; and ere the sun set, the Castle Jermyn was safe back at her old mooring, and all her passengers (bipeds and quadrupeds) were in comfortable quarters at St Thomas's College, under the Bishop's hospitable roof.

CHAPTER VI.

TO THE HILLS.

To the hills—Rice-fields—The railway—Kitool and talipot palms—Olas—Bread-fruit—Jak—Papaw—Kapok—Road-making—Major Skinner—Gampola—The Delta—Rambodda Pass—Pallagolla.

SOON after our return we spent an interesting forenoon at Cotta, about six miles from Colombo, a very pretty place, where the river broadens so as to form a clear, calm lake, embosomed in groves of cocoa-palms. Cotta has the double interest of having been the residence of the Singhalese kings at the time when the Portuguese first came to bring misery, discord, and war, and the modern and most peaceful interest of having been a very important station of the Church Missionary Society, almost ever since it first commenced work in Ceylon in 1818. A printing-press was then established here, which has been to the Singhalese all that the American press at Jaffna has been to the Tamils. (See concluding chapter.)

A very important branch of the work here is the Training Institution for Native Students of Divinity and Schoolmasters. The fact that (although selected from the most promising pupils in all parts of the Isle) these at present

only number respectively five and four, speaks volumes for the difficulty of filling these important posts.

Another very important feature is the boarding-school, open to any Singhalese girl of good character, irrespective of caste or religion. It has been open about sixteen years, during which time about 250 girls have been trained, some remaining for ten years. A considerable number become Christians and teachers in the schools. The same may be said of the English school for boys, which has an average attendance of ninety, of whom nearly half are Buddhists, all of whom, however, voluntarily attend the Scripture classes.

Troops of pretty, happy-looking children, boys and girls, from the various schools had assembled to greet the Bishop; and in the crowded church were no less than fifty-three candidates for confirmation, all Singhalese and Burghers.

Early on the following morning we started for the hills, travelling by the beautiful railway, which is certainly one of the loveliest lines of rail I know of. Part of it reminded me of that through the Bombay Ghauts. But, ere reaching the mountain district, we traversed a wide expanse of swampy paddy-fields, most refreshing to the eyes, the intensely vivid green of the young rice crops far exceeding that of our own wheat-fields.

It is a cultivation involving much toil, and singularly unpleasant to those engaged in it, as from first to last it is all in mud. To begin with that on level ground, each tiny field must be scooped out so as to form a small lakelet several feet deep, the mud thus obtained forming an embankment which retains the water, so that the rice may never be dry till it is fully ripe. These embankments form the footpaths by which the people travel from field to field.

On hillsides the toil is of a different sort. There it consists in building up terraces, tier above tier, for many hundred feet, so as to produce a succession of tiny lakes, curving with the formation of the ground, each supported in front by a solid embankment, which in some cases is five or six feet in depth. These are constructed with least trouble in glens and valleys where the ground forms an angle, and where a stream flows naturally; but I have seen steep hillsides so terraced as to present a most singular effect of small lakes, fed by rivulets carefully led to the summit from some distant source.

By this contrivance all available water is distributed and stored during the dry season, and when the rains come, the superfluous water flows from one tier of tank-like terraces to the next without washing away the soil. Thus, thanks to the patient industry of the husbandmen, almost precipitous hillsides are green with waving rice crops. At all times the contrivances for irrigation are suggestive of infinite pains, small water-courses being led by aqueducts of mud and stone or bamboo to carry tiny rivers of life through miles of jungle, from the cool hills to the parched plains below. The cultivation of the steep hillsides is exactly the same as in the Himalayas, and the narrow fields are ploughed with the same antediluvian hand implements.

The cultivation of the plains is less toilsome. When the ground has been thoroughly saturated, the water is turned off, and the soil is stirred to a depth of about eighteen inches by a very primitive plough drawn by two buffaloes. Then the water is turned on again, and on the flat ground herds of buffaloes are allowed to wade at will and wallow in the mud, till it becomes so fluid as to sink to a perfect level. The buffaloes thus incrusted with mud are truly disgusting-

looking objects, and present a most curious contrast to the long-legged, pure white paddy-birds which stalk after them as inseparable companions.

The rice (which has been previously well soaked) is now scattered on the level surface—most literally casting bread upon the waters, to be found after many days. In about a fortnight the black mud is carpeted to a depth of four inches with the loveliest green. The water is run off and on alternately till just before the grain is ripe, when the ground is allowed to dry, preparatory to harvest.

Where water does not fail, these fields yield two crops annually — the *maha*, or great crop, sown in spring and reaped in early autumn; the second, called *yalla*, sown about July and reaped in December. Hence, about the month of September, there may be harvesting of ripe grain and treading-out of corn by unmuzzled oxen or buffaloes in some fields, while others are being ploughed by buffaloes or just appearing in sheets of fresh young green. The exact dates are regulated by the somewhat uncertain coming of the monsoons (in Biblical language, "the former and latter rains"), due in the southern provinces in May and November.

Simple and idyllic as this primitive farming seems to the casual observer, these verdant fields are sometimes the occasion of wearisome lawsuits; for, as according to Singhalese custom all property is equally divided among a man's heirs, and then again subdivided, it follows that a score of owners may share in the cultivation of a small paddy-field, and in the division of its crop.

Other fields are the common property of a whole village, and the produce has to be divided in certain proportions among the villagers, from the owner of the buffaloes employed to plough and trample the land, down to the dhoby

who does the village washing. I may add that the word paddy means unhusked rice, of which two bushels yield one of cleaned rice.

Leaving the level plain, we gradually ascended—upward, still upward, all the way, wending round sharp curves and by many zigzags, so that we could sometimes see both the last carriage of the train and the engines! The carriages are provided with broad white roofs and venetian shutters as some protection against the sun. The engines are all of the most powerful construction, as well they may be, seeing that for upwards of twelve miles, while rounding the flank of Allagalla, a grand craggy mountain, the uniform gradient is 1 in 45. By the time we reached the summit of Kadugannawa Pass, about sixty miles from Colombo, we had ascended 1700 feet. In front of each engine is a "cow-catcher," intended to sweep off any inquisitive animals which may rashly wander on to the line. Unfortunately even this is not always effectual, and the carelessness of owners of cattle in allowing their animals to stray upon the railway is incredible. The railway report for 1890 shows that 129 bullocks and cows were run over by trains during the year, besides occasional buffaloes. Last May a herd of these were run into near Polgahawela station, and though some were swept aside, one was run over, causing the wheels to run off the rails. Fortunately the train was stopped ere grave damage was done.

It is a single broad-gauge line, and in truth, when we see what frightful engineering difficulties had to be overcome in its construction, the succession of tunnels (one of which, through Moragalla, is 365 feet in length), and the skirting of precipitous crags, we can understand something of the causes which limited its width.

Worse even than the stubborn rocks of the mountains in the central province, was the awful malaria, which in those days was so prevalent in some of the low-lying inland districts, that it was almost certain death to sleep in them. The coolies who worked on the line died by hundreds; and in the tract lying between Mirigama and the Dekanda valley, so many perished that at last there literally was not found room for their burial within easy distance of the line. As the only possibility of keeping them alive, it was found necessary to take them all back to Colombo every night, a distance of about fifty miles. Of the Europeans in charge of the works, one after another succumbed, and had to be shipped off from Ceylon with health shattered by the deadly fever.[1]

Now, doubtless owing to improved drainings, and to the wholesale 'cleaning of the jungle to make room for divers forms of cultivation, the pestilential malaria is a story of the past; and of the dense impenetrable forest which fifty years ago clothed the steep Kadugannawa Pass only a few trees remain, and there is nothing whatever to suggest to the luxurious traveller what pains and perils were endured, and how many lives were sacrificed, ere this splendid line was

[1] Possibly some of the many victims of jungle fever in other lands may be disposed to try the simple remedy described in a letter to the Editor of the 'Ceylon Observer.' The writer states that his stalwart brother had, from repeated attacks of Indian jungle fever, dwindled to a mere skeleton, when a *fakir* came to his tent and offered to permanently cure him.

His *materia medica* were of the simplest, consisting only of a flat piece of iron and a bottle of sugar-cane vinegar. The former was made red-hot, and the vinegar was poured over it, the patient inhaling the fumes. This operation was repeated only a second time, and from that day forward, in the thirteen years up to date of the letter, the sufferer never had a return of fever, and quite recovered his health.

opened even thus far. Indeed, on one's first journey, there is no time for any impressions save those of wonder and admiration at the rapidly changing panorama of most beautiful scenery.

Even when gliding along the face of sheer crags, looking down on the valley a thousand feet below, one scarcely realises the situation. For myself, frequently passing and repassing up and down this line, and living for happy weeks in its neighbourhood, always pencil in hand, I learnt to realise something of what must have been the dangers involved in constructing such portions as "The Bear's Mouth," "Sensation Rock," and the half-tunnel gallery along the face of the Meeangalla precipice.

And yet all these are said to be plain sailing as compared with the difficulties which are now being successfully overcome by the engineers of the extension to Haputale, which is opening up much of the grandest scenery in the Isle; so that almost ere these pages are published, the most easy-going tourist will be able, without the smallest exertion, to see whole districts which hitherto have been inaccessible even to old residents. And not in this direction only, but north, south, east, and west, the necessity of railway extension is being recognised; and in a very few years, so far as any difficulty is concerned, travelling to any corner of Ceylon will be as matter-of-fact as a journey from London to Edinburgh!

The railway system in Ceylon is entirely in the hands of Government, and it is urged by those who plead for extension, that opening up the country will certainly lead to great increase of traffic and consequent revenue. With the exception of that between Kandy and Matala, the lines hitherto constructed are said to be about the best paying in the world.

As to the stations, so much care is bestowed on their gardens that each is a thing of beauty, embowered in luxuriant climbing plants, and all manner of fragrant and brilliant flowers. All names are written up in English, Tamil, and Singhalese, in their respective characters, so that all travellers may read, every man in his own tongue, unperplexed by the hateful advertisements which disfigure our British stations.

At each, pretty Singhalese children offer for sale baskets of tempting fruit, and cool refreshing young cocoa-nuts which they cut open, and hand all ready to the thirsty traveller. Fortunately for sight-seers, the rate of travel is not excessive, twenty-eight miles an hour being the utmost speed on the very best bit of level, while on the steep incline twelve miles an hour is the regulation limit, and at one point rather less.

There is so much to see on either side, that eyes and mind must be constantly on duty, whether looking right up to the mountains overhead, or down to the grand valley outspread far far below, all clothed with richest vegetation, every variety of palm mingling with endless varieties of hardwood, while the little terraced rice-fields on the slopes of the hills, and those on the flat expanse below, either present sheets of the most dazzling green or seem like a mosaic of innumerable tiny lakes. And on every side of this great valley rise hills of every variety of form—a billowy sea of mountain-ranges, all glorified by ever-changing effects of light and shadow, veiling mist or sweeping storm, followed by that "clear shining after rain" which daily reveals new beauties in mountain regions.

To me that scene recalls endless pleasant memories of happy days and weeks spent in exploring many a lovely corner in that vast panorama — memories of the cordial hospitality which gave me welcome to nest-like homes on

many a hill and valley, and of one in particular, to which I was welcomed again and again, perched at the base of the mighty crag which crowns Allagalla Peak—which is a beautiful isolated mountain, 3394 feet in height—from the summit of which, it is said, the Kandyan monarchs were wont to precipitate persons accused of high treason.

That home was in a sheltered nook embosomed in fruit-trees, and overlooking such a magnificent view as we may sometimes obtain for a few moments by climbing some mighty Alp, but which few homes can claim as their perpetual outlook.

Thence far below us, and yet far above the valley, we could discern two narrow lines, and we knew that the lower one was the cart-road and the upper one the railroad, and suddenly a double puff of steam would rise, and there, darting from a tunnel, was a long train with an engine at either end, labouring on its tortuous up-hill course, winding round the steep hillside. It was so far below us that it seemed like a fairy's toy, and yet it gave us a sense of touch with our fellow-creatures, which in so isolated an eyrie was rather pleasant.

As we gradually ascended from the sea-level we observed a very marked change in the character of the vegetation, one of the most conspicuous trees being covered with bunches of white blossom, which in the distance resemble our own white lilac; the young leaves being pure white, and all silvery on the under side, so that, when swaying in the breeze, the tree contrasts prettily with its neighbours. I believe it is a croton, though utterly unlike the very gorgeously coloured members of that family. This is called by the Singhalese *kekuna*, and from its nuts they used to extract an oil for lamps. In Fiji, where we found the identical tree and

much of the identical vegetation, these are known as candle-nuts, and I have seen them strung on the rib of a palm-leaf to act as candles, and very dull was the light they gave!

A far more showy tree is the Moratuwa (*Lagerstrœmia regina*), which flourishes near streams, growing to a height of from 40 to 50 feet, and bears splendid upright spikes, two or three feet in length, of exquisite blossoms, varying from a delicate rose-colour to rich purple. Think of the most beautiful horse-chestnut you ever saw, and magnify and glorify its wealth of blossom, and you can perhaps form some idea of this beautiful tree. It flowers on Allagalla in the month of April. (I am told that these trees are in their glory in the Bintenna district, near Mahaoya village, where the whole western side of the Mahaoya river presents a blaze of rosy purple, and stretching along the river-bed of yellow sand, relieved by a background of dark green, a gorgeous scene in the bright morning light.)

And trees here rarely stand naked and alone, as in England; they are generally enriched by graceful parasites, ferns or perhaps orchids clothe stem and boughs, and a great variety of lianas climb to the very summit of the tallest trees, and droop thence in long trails or festoons of delicate greenery, connecting a whole group of trees with their verdant veiling, often starred with white or blue convolvulus.

Near the sea, and indeed so far inland as the saturated sea-breeze carries the salt spray, the vegetation is often so encrusted with salt, that the young leaves seem partially blighted; but only in gales of unusual violence is the brine carried so far as this, and it would be difficult to conceive foliage richer and more beautiful than that through which we were now passing. It seemed as though Mother Nature must have taxed all her inventive powers to devise an infi-

nite variety of graceful forms. I noticed this especially in the matter of palms, which are at all times peculiarly fascinating, but on some isles only one or two flourish, and from their multitude they become monotonous. But here the eye can never weary, so amazing is the diversity of form and colour presented to it in ever-changing combination of strangely dissimilar palms, tree-ferns, and all manner of hardwood, bearing large leaves or small, leathery or woolly, in endless variety.

Though we had left the seaboard (the special region of the brine-loving cocoa-palm), there were still enough of those graceful bending stems and long waving fronds to contrast with the picturesque clumps of stiff fan-leaved palmyra-palms (with rough dark stems upright as pillars, crowned by capitals of glossy green), and with the slender silvery areca, so slender that a stem 70 or 80 feet high does not exceed 5 or 6 in diameter.

The latter flourishes at any altitude from the sea-level up to about 3000 feet, and is sometimes planted to mark estate boundaries, and sometimes as an avenue.

Totally different from these or from any other member of the beautiful clan palm, and to me most attractive of all, was the kitool or jaggery palm (*Caryota urens*). Its leaves are just like gigantic fronds of the lovely maiden-hair fern of our hothouses. It is the richest and most beautiful foliage that can be imagined, and its mode of flowering is very remarkable. Till the last year of its life, by which time it has attained a height of 50 or 60 feet, it bears leaves only, then from the axil of the topmost leaf it throws out a large cluster of flowers, and as this fades, another and another cluster flowers all the way down the tree, alternately male and female, until the lowest leaf-axil is reached,

and the mass of fruitage is such that the exhausted tree then dies.

The fruit is as unique as the leaf, for instead of bearing about a hundred large nuts in clusters like other palms, it produces an innumerable multitude of juicy berries about the size of grapes, growing in festoons several feet in length, like heavy drapery.

Under the impression that the natives eat these sweet berries, I was one day tempted to taste them; but the rash experiment was immediately followed by a burning pain in my lips, which continued unabated for some hours, notwithstanding the application of oil, water, lime-juice, everything we could think of. It was rather alarming, although I knew it could not be poison, inasmuch as the natives manufacture both sugar and palm-wine from the saccharine sap, obtained by bruising the undeveloped blossom, and this coarse brown jaggery-sugar is rather a pleasant sweetmeat.

A good tree sometimes yields a hundred pints of this sweet sap or toddy in twenty-four hours. When the tree dies, good sago is obtained from its pith; and its hard black timber is valuable for house-building, and also, from its being tough and pliable, is generally used for making the pingoes or yokes, six or eight feet in length, which are balanced on the shoulder and used for carrying loads slung from either end, the elastic spring of the pingo greatly lessening the dead-weight thus carried. The leaf-stalks yield a black fibre, from which are prepared fine lines for fishing and ropes stout enough to bind elephants.

But the Palm of Palms, of which I now for the first time saw a considerable number, each in solitary grandeur, is the talipot,[1] or great fan-palm, the stately monarch of the palm

[1] *Corypha umbraculifera.*

kingdom, whose grand green crown far overtops all its fellows. For the first thirty years of its life it grows only magnificent fan-shaped leaves like those of the palmyra, but much larger.

If there be any truth in the legend which affirms Ceylon to have been the Paradise of our first parents, it must be confessed that Eve showed a truly feminine love of sewing in her selection of foliage, as a single leaf of the talipot palm would have been amply sufficient for train and mantle —being on an average 18 feet in length (sometimes very much larger), and all ready folded into plaits like those of a lady's dress.

The natives turn these leaves to a thousand uses, domestic and literary. When on a journey (and especially pilgrims bound for sacred shrines in the wilds) each carries a portion of one of these great leaves, tightly folded into a long narrow form, like a gigantic closed fan. This serves as a sun-shade or rain-cloak by day, and at night several friends contribute every man his palm-leaf—three or four of these, with the pointed end upwards, forming a very fair bell-shaped tent; and very picturesque a few groups of these look when pitched in some forest glade round their camp-fires.

In old days the exact grade of every great Singhalese or Kandyan noble was shown by the number of such sun-shades which he was entitled to have carried before him; and on State occasions a richly ornamented leaf, inlaid with pieces of glittering talc, and folded like a huge fan, formed the ceremonial canopy which was held above his head by one or more attendants.[1]

[1] I embodied many curious details regarding the honorific use of the sun-shade in all ages and all countries in a paper on "Pagodas, Umbrellas, and Aurioles," which appeared in the 'English Illustrated Magazine' for June and July 1888.

The leaves attain their largest size when the tree is about twenty years of age, at which time they sometimes measure 25 feet from the base of the leaf-stalk to the outer edge of the fan. As the tree grows older, the leaves are smaller—the strength of the tree being absorbed in preparation for its gigantic final effort of blossom and fruition.

After the first ten years a visible trunk begins to form, and for perhaps thirty years more it grows steadily, till the grand white stem towers, straight as a mast, to a height of upwards of a hundred feet, sustaining the magnificent crown of gigantic leaves. Like most of the palm family, the stem bears ring-marks where the annual leaves have gripped it.

The tree attains maturity at about forty years of age, when it slowly develops one huge bud fully four feet high. In course of time the expanding blossom bursts its prison, and develops into an enormous spike of hermaphrodite flowers, taking about three months to perfect a majestic pyramid of snowy plumes composed of multitudinous small cream-coloured flowers, something like those of the yucca, and of an almost overpowering scent. These form one splendid mass of blossom, rising from the heart of the leafy crown to a height of from 20 to 25 feet, towering far above the surrounding foliage. This stupendous cluster throws out lateral branches, of which the lower tier sometimes measures 20 feet—the base of the pyramid thus having a diameter of 40 feet! It is a glorious object, and is visible from an immense distance, as this palm so often grows among flat surroundings, such as rice-fields.

But the tree, which for wellnigh half a century has been accumulating strength for this one supreme effort, never recovers the exhaustion of such tremendous exertion. Its

latest energies are lavished on the ripening of its one crop of innumerable, but I believe useless, nuts, each about the size of a small apple. Then, having fulfilled its mission right nobly, and borne down by the weight of its crop, the noble tree sickens, its leaves wither, the soft upper end of the stem decays; then the roots likewise decay, and within a year of the date when the great blossom-spike first began to appear, the dead tree falls prostrate—leaving its crown of precious leaves as a last legacy to its owner. (Though indigenous to Ceylon and the adjacent coast of Malabar, this palm is nowhere found wild.)

Strange to say, the talipot is of a gregarious habit as regards flowering. Some years many are in blossom, and a noble sight they present. I believe I was peculiarly fortunate in the number which I saw simultaneously between Kandy and Colombo. Then for perhaps eight or ten years there are very few. If cut while the tree is still young, it yields a white pith, of which the natives make cakes; but naturally so precious a tree is not sacrificed needlessly.

The leaves, when carefully prepared, are the equivalent of our vellum. The most precious ancient manuscripts were all inscribed with a sharp-pointed metal style on long narrow strips of talipot-leaf; a number of these being strung together form a volume. These are carefully tied up between two long narrow covers, which may be only painted wooden boards, but, in the case of old temple books, are sometimes highly ornamented and even enriched with precious gems. In some cases these covers are of embossed gold or silver. There are very fine specimens in the Temple Library at Kandy.

The preparation of the *olas* or "vellum" strips is done by the junior priests and students in Buddhist monasteries. Tender young leaves are selected, and the ribs having been

removed, the leaf is cut into strips, which are boiled in spring-water and then slowly dried in the shade, and finally in the sun, after which they are again damped, and each is individually polished by being drawn backwards and forwards for about twenty minutes over the smooth stem of an areca palm, which for convenience' sake is tied horizontally between two trees. The olas, which are now of a delicate straw colour, are then rolled up, and kept in store ready for use.

For ordinary books and letters, the olas are prepared from the leaves of the far more abundant palmyra-palm. Even in these days, when foreign manufactured paper is so cheap and abundant, the palm-leaf happily still continues in favour —even the narrow fronds of the cocoa-palm affording a never-failing supply of ready-made writing materials, the hard mid-rib acting as a pen when no sharper implement is at hand. I may add that Singhalese writing is very neat and small, and it is wonderful to see what straight lines are produced by writers who have no support for the strip except their own left hand.

In marked contrast with these stately fan-palms, and with the light waving plumes of the cocoas, are the bread-fruit trees, with their masses of dark-green foliage and large pale-green fruit nestling beneath separate crowns of splendid glossy leaves, deeply indented. I have measured a good many of these leaves, and found some on young trees which actually measured 3 feet 2 inches by 2 feet 4 inches, while others on older trees averaged 21 to 25 inches in length. Each of these great leaves acts as a mirror to reflect the light, so that the bread-fruit tree casts no great depth of shadow (*Artocarpus incisa*).

Of course every one who sees a bread-fruit tree for the first

time longs to taste the natural hot buttered rolls of his childhood's fancy; but I fear the result is generally disappointing. Personally I have had abundant opportunities of tasting it in all its preparations, and I cannot say I greatly appreciate any of them, whether boiled or baked, as in Fiji and Tahiti, or made into glutinous *poi* in Hawaii. From the fact that this grand tree is not even named by so accurate an observer as Sir James Emerson Tennent, I assume that, common as it now is, it must be one of the many importations of the last half-century; for Ceylon, like New Zealand, has proved so good a stepmother to all manner of trees and flowers, that it is only by reference to the earliest botanists that we can trace what plants are really indigenous.

Among these, I think, we may rank a first cousin of the bread-fruit tree—namely, the jak (*Artocarpus integrifolia*)—a large tree with less attractive foliage, which, however, casts a deeper shadow (a valuable consideration beneath a tropical noonday sun). It produces the largest of all edible fruits, one tree bearing perhaps a hundred, some weighing as much as sixty pounds; and its extraordinary peculiarity lies in the manner in which it carries them, hanging by short thick stalks, not only from the actual trunk of the tree and the thickest part of the boughs, but sometimes even from the roots!

They are enclosed in a rough green skin, and, when ripe, the interior of the fruit is a thick yellow substance, which is eaten raw, and in which are embedded a number of kernels, each the size of a large filbert-nut. These, if the fruit is gathered unripe, are either roasted or used as a vegetable curry, much appreciated by the natives, though not in favour with Europeans. The wood of the jak-tree is highly valued by carpenters for making furniture, and a strong bird-lime

is prepared from its milky juice—not sap, the two being totally distinct, as in India-rubber trees.

This milk is used as a varnish for the very gaudily painted pottery-ware peculiar to Kandy, on which temple processions or scenes in Buddhist mythology are depicted in the crudest and most brilliant colours. Some vases are simply covered with patterns. The effect is peculiar, but by no means artistic.

Next perhaps comes a wide-spreading India-rubber tree, with dark thick leathery leaves and strangely twisted snake-like roots, and then a glimpse of brown-thatched huts and blue smoke, half hidden by orange and lemon, lime or shaddock trees, tall maize or sugar-cane, or flowering hibiscus, with here and there the slender stem of a papaw,[1] 15 to 20 feet in height, supporting a crown of very large beautifully cut-out leaves, beneath which hang bunches of fruit like small green melons, with yellow flesh, which are either cooked or eaten raw with pepper and salt. The seeds have a hot pungent taste.

The fruit is considered useful as an aid to digestion, and an excellent vegetable pepsine can be prepared from the green fruit by mixing its milky, rather acid, juice with alcohol. The combination precipitates papaïn, which is then dried in the sun or on a hot plate, and powdered, and must be kept in well-stoppered bottles, ready for use in cases of dyspepsia. It is said to be superior to the ordinary animal pepsine, and has proved a valuable remedy in the treatment of tapeworm.

The stem of the papaw is covered with a pretty diamond-shaped pattern, and the general appearance of the plant is that of a very tall umbrella. It has one very curious property—namely, that tough fresh meat hung up under the

[1] *Carica papaya.*

shadow of its crown of leaves becomes tender in a very few hours. Of course it must also be closely wrapped in leaves to protect it from flies.

As we journey onward we pass clumps of graceful golden-stemmed bamboos, elegant acacias, feathery tamarind-trees, which, strange to say, notwithstanding the delicacy of their foliage, are found to cast the coolest of all shade; thorny coral-trees,[1] which, ere the leaves appear, are covered with scarlet pea-shaped blossoms; and tall perfectly upright cotton-trees,[2] called by the Singhalese Katu-Imbul.

These throw out stiff lateral branches in groups of three, about six feet apart, from a vividly green stem. The branches, like those of the coral-tree, are loaded with cup-shaped crimson blossoms ere any leaves develop, and afterwards bear large green pods, containing black seeds embedded in silky white cotton, which floats away like snowflakes in the sunny breeze. This silky down is called *imbul-pulun* or simply *pulun*, a name curiously resembling that of *pulu*, which is the Hawaiian name for the silky brown fluff collected from certain tree-ferns, and used for stuffing the softest of mattresses and pillows.[3]

Owing to the trouble of separating this cotton or *pulun* from the seeds, it has hitherto been collected in a very desultory way, and is only used for stuffing cushions, the fibre being so short and brittle that no means of spinning it has yet been discovered. Latterly, however, a considerable demand for it has arisen, chiefly in Australia, for stuffing mattresses, and under the Malay name of *kapok* a considerable amount has been exported, but so carelessly has it

[1] *Erythrina indica.* [2] *Bombax malabaricum.*

[3] See Fire-Fountains of Hawaii. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by William Blackwood & Sons.

hitherto been prepared (with the seeds and cores left to form hard lumps, and the whole, moreover, compressed into a solid mass by hydraulic pressure in order to economise freight, thereby breaking the spring of the fibre and destroying its elasticity) that Ceylon *kapok* has acquired a bad reputation as compared with the carefully cleaned and lightly packed bales of the same fibre exported from Java.

However, as wise men profit by experience, there seems no reason why one bad start should be allowed to injure this trade. Personally I can speak of the charm of this flossy fibre, having always travelled with a pillow stuffed with some collected and cleaned by myself, with the aid of a pretty Singhalese girl, and certainly no eider-down could excel its softness. But I am bound to confess that the separation of the fibre from the seeds was very tedious work, even with the help of the deft-fingered brown maiden, and it is satisfactory to learn that a "cotton gin," which is said to answer well, has recently been adapted to this purpose.

It is hoped that some method may also be devised for turning to account the strong fibrous stem, for the plant is so very accommodating that it flourishes almost without cultivation, and at any level, from the sea-coast up to 4000 or 5000 feet. In Java its abundance is partly accounted for by the fact that its perfectly straight stems, 50 or 60 feet in height, led to their use in every direction as telegraph posts. These kindly put out roots, and became flourishing trees; at the same time waste lands near the villages had been planted with cuttings or sown with *kapok* seed to keep up the supply of tall posts, and so Java is now rich in the silky fibre which has become so remunerative.

I grieve that the attempt to describe what is so infinitely varied to the eye must necessarily be somewhat monotonous

to the reader, so I must ask each to try in imagination to fill in the picturesque groups of human beings, brightly dressed Tamil or Singhalese men, women, and children, birds and animals, which gave life to every scene.

At the summit of the steep Kadugannawa Pass there is a monument to Captain Dawson, R.E., who had charge of the construction of the original road up the Pass, which for forty years before the railway was completed, was the only means of access to the mountain districts from the north and west. Captain Dawson died in 1829.

To travellers and other folk to whom time is precious, the railway seems so vast an improvement on "the old carriage-road," that it is difficult to realise the amazing change which was effected by its creation only about sixty years ago (A.D. 1822). Prior to that time there were only two roads even in the Maritime Provinces, and those so bad as scarcely to be worthy of the name. Along these, travellers were carried in palanquins, with a retinue of heavily laden baggage coolies. As to the Central Province, it was altogether inaccessible to any but hill-climbers.

Kandy itself, the mountain capital, to which the railway now carries us from Colombo in four hours of luxurious travel (by a route which is one of the great triumphs of railway engineering), could then only be approached with infinite toil by steep, rugged, narrow jungle-paths, in many places dangerous for riders, and quite impossible for vehicles of any description.

By these all stores of every description, whether for peace or war, were carried on the backs of weary men, and the transport of big guns was a matter to tax the ingenuity of the artillery. It was hard enough for the men to drag the guns through deep sand along the coast, but the toil of

getting them up mountain passes was indescribable. When Colonel Skinner, R.A. (father of Major Skinner, "the road-maker of Ceylon"), had to bring up his battery of heavy guns for the taking of Kandy, the only way in which this could be effected was by "parbuckling the guns up from tree to tree!"

The worthy son of this distinguished father commenced his road-making service in this very Pass, so I cannot refrain from some reference thereto, especially as I travelled over many and many a mile of his broad highways.

He is one of the noble Britons who have done magnificent work for their country, but who would assuredly have been rejected at the outset had competitive examinations been the passport to enter her service. For in his delightful autobiography[1] Thomas Skinner tells us that when, in A.D. 1818, at the ripe age of fourteen, he was sent out from a quiet vicarage in Dorsetshire to join his father, who was then stationed at Trincomalee, he was as ignorant as a boy of his age could well be, and his father could hardly be persuaded not to send him back to England to school.

Fortunately what proved to be wiser counsels prevailed, and on the recommendation of two naval officers, Sir Robert Brownrigg, the Governor, appointed him to be second lieutenant in the Ceylon Rifles, with orders at once to march detachments of the 19th, 83d, and Ceylon Rifles across the Isle from Trincomalee to Colombo *viâ* Kandy, by the difficult jungle-paths, which were then the sole means of crossing the island.

In the farewell address of the native chiefs to Major Skinner, just fifty years later, their spokesman, Mr James

[1] Fifty Years in Ceylon. By Major Thomas Skinner. W. H. Allen & Co.

Alwis, recalled how at that time, when there were no roads in the interior of Ceylon, the march from Colombo to Kandy occupied *about six weeks*, crossing malarious swamps and feverish jungle, toiling up steep ravines, climbing over rocks, or skirting precipices. (Thinking of that journey, now so pleasantly accomplished *in four hours*, my first impression was that the word weeks must surely be a misprint for days; but I am told that this is not the case, the route then followed being so circuitous, and the daily marches necessarily short. After the cart-road was made, the journey was accomplished in five days, which was the average prior to 1867, when the railway was opened.)

As the distance from Kandy to Trincomalee is much greater, Tom Skinner's first military duty must have been a very serious undertaking, though he accepted it quite as a matter of course, and does not deem it worthy of a comment, beyond remarking that the appearance of such a very small boy, dressed in his schoolboy jacket, at the head of his men, caused some amusement among the officers at Kandy. No wonder that, on his reporting himself at Colombo, his astonished commanding officer could scarcely believe his eyes when he beheld the stripling who had performed this duty.

From that time nothing came amiss to the lad. His very first experience of sport, at a time when he had never even seen a tame elephant, was starting off alone to meet a huge solitary elephant, with remarkably fine tusks. (Barely four per cent of the Ceylon elephants possess tusks at all, and not one in two hundred are of any size.) His terrified sergeant hastened to the rescue, but by extraordinary good fortune the boy shot the giant dead, with a single shot from a flint-and-steel musket, as it was rushing headlong at him—a feat

which delighted his men all the more from the magnificent unconcern with which their *tuan kilehel*, "little officer," treated the whole matter!

Before he had been a year in the island, the lad had passed through more remarkable experiences than befall many men in the course of a lifetime—such as finding himself left in sole charge of troops cut off from all commissariat supplies, and also sole European in a district where smallpox had appeared and was raging (the first time it had visited Ceylon). He organised foraging parties, and established a smallpox hospital under his own care—all with such courtesy and wisdom as won the hearts of all the people.

Happily his superiors, both civil and military, were not slow to note the young officer's remarkable genius for work. When about sixteen, he was appointed by the Governor, Sir Edward Barnes, to make eleven miles of the great road up the Kadugannawa Pass, by which the hitherto almost inaccessible Kandyan Provinces were to be opened up. This was work of which he was totally ignorant. His sole direction was to maintain a gradient of one in twenty, and what that meant he had no idea. So when he found himself among enormous boulders and perpendicular precipices, in charge of two hundred untutored Kandyan villagers, he was at first thoroughly perplexed; but earnest resolution and untiring zeal inspired him with a sort of instinct what to do then, as in many a subsequent difficulty.

The making of that first road forms a very important era in the history of Ceylon. With such energy was its construction carried on, that within twelve months of the date of the order for surveying and tracing it through a densely wooded mountainous country, the first eighty-four miles between Colombo and Kandy was so far completed that the sup-

plies for the troops could be conveyed thither on wheels. Rapidly as these and other roads were surveyed and constructed, more recent engineers have had no fault to find. It was splendid work, well and quickly done.

The men employed were—*first*, a noble force of Pioneers; *secondly*, such of the native troops as could be spared, and who were fit for such work; and *thirdly*, the gratuitous labour of the people, who by their own laws were compelled to render service to the State when required to do so.

This system of *Rajah-Karia*, as it was called, and which under the British was soon abolished, proved invaluable in those early days, when used in moderation by such a Governor as Sir Edward Barnes, whose wisdom and justice were revered by high and low. So greatly was he esteemed, that when seventeen years after he left the island, a statue of him was erected in Colombo, so many of the natives came from the interior to lay offerings of flowers, rice, and money at the base of the pedestal (as is customary at their shrines), that it was found necessary to surround the statue with a railing to prevent its being treated as an idol!

The Pioneer Corps here referred to is a semi-military force of about 4000 men of the very best class of Malabar labourers. They were raised by Major Skinner in order that he might always have trained workmen on whom he could rely for steady continuous work in the making of roads, bridges, and canals; and they continue to be kept up as a valuable permanent corps, employed by the Department of Public Works.

During the whole fifty years of Major Skinner's public service, the story of his life is more interesting than any romance, illustrating, as it does, what could be accomplished by an unassuming man, brimful of pluck, energy, self-

reliance, self-help, and quiet determination never to refuse any work that came in his way, and never to fail in anything he undertook, from conquering veteran players at chess to creating a network of first-class roads all over the Isle, discovering and opening up the long-forgotten ruined cities, restoring the ruined canal system of the Maritime Provinces, and finally securing an enormous reduction on the estimates and actual cost of the railway which was to supplant so much of his road work.

With him, to discover a difficulty was the sure preliminary to conquering it; and to such a nature there was keen delight in the knowledge that his work lay either in breaking perfectly new ground, or else in restoring long-neglected works, and this in an island as large as Ireland.

He tells us how invaluable to him in his road-making were the tracks of the herds of wild elephants, so judiciously were they invariably selected, and so well trodden. "The top of every ridge," he says, "had its broad road along which one could drive a carriage, while from range to range one was always sure to find a cross-road which invariably led to the easiest crossing of the river in the valley."

That preliminary survey and much of his subsequent work involved an amount of exposure, hardship, and actual privation, of which the present generation can form no conception. Fever and dysentery were the almost inevitable results of life under such conditions.

For six or seven months in each year he was hard at work, often in most unhealthy, malarious districts, and never under shelter from 4 A.M. till 7 or 8 P.M. And his only tent consisted of five sheets of talipot-palm leaf, stitched together with its own fibre. Each leaf being about 6 feet by 4, three

leaves formed two sides and one end, and the other two the roof. Along the top was a small ridge-cap of the same material, and the door always stood open. Within this leaf-tent stood his camp-bed, table, and chair; and as one set of leaves, value a trifle over a shilling, lasted him for a whole season, he reckoned that his quarters were not expensive!

At one time, when he was surveying in the wilderness of the Peak (which was then an unbroken expanse of about 500 square miles of splendid forest), his only food during two months consisted—with the exception of rice and of some wild forest roots—of five miserable chickens, three of which had died from wet and cold on their ascent of the Holy Mount, and so small a quantity of salt fish, that he could only allow himself about one square inch for each meal. He was always a model of temperance in all things, to which he attributed much of his amazing gift of health under most adverse circumstances.

His own account of his life at this time is of such interest to many who would fain emulate his powers as a mountaineer, that I am tempted to quote it in full. He says: "On beginning my season's work I found it necessary to discipline myself as to the amount of liquid I took; and for ten days I suffered terribly, as the exposure to the sun, with the great amount of work I had to go through, caused the most profuse perspirations, and an almost irresistible longing to put my head into every mountain brook I crossed, to quench my burning thirst. I sometimes assuaged it for a time by putting a bit of areca-nut in my mouth, its stringency giving me temporary relief; but by persevering in this course of abstinence for a few days, I found life became more bearable.

"My allowance of liquid during the day was a small

cup of coffee before I started in the morning; breakfast during these two months consisted only of a bit of cake made of rice-flour and water, a biscuit or two, and a cup of cold tea which I carried in a small bottle. In the evening my dinner was boiled rice and a small bit of salt fish, or sometimes some jungle roots made into a curry, a glass of sherry mixed with an equal quantity of water; and after dinner, a cup of coffee with my cigar.

"All the liquid I took during the day did not exceed one imperial pint; this *régime* brought me into such splendid working condition, that I could outrun any one. One very active headman begged me to give him an opportunity of racing me up the cone of Adam's Peak. We started, and he went off at a great pace, and was out of sight in a few minutes, but three-quarters of a mile was sufficient to blow him. I passed him, and was on the summit forty minutes before him. In like manner I could leave all the athletes of a village behind me."

His working staff at that time consisted of African soldiers, considered the hardiest men in the British army. He says he often longed for a taste of their savoury meals, but resisted the temptation, fearing lest their provisions might run short. They were on full rations of salt beef or pork, rice, curry stuffs, and arrack, and were allowed two days in camp for each day on field-work with their leader (who was out hard at work every day), yet by the time they reached Nuwara Eliya every man except himself was laid up.

Before the close of the season, however, he suffered severely from sore legs, resulting from poverty of blood, consequent on deficient animal food. But the habit then acquired of limiting his allowance of fluid, continued a

lasting advantage, as to the end of his life he says he never knew what thirst meant.

This seems a long digression, but seeing how enormously I as a mere traveller have benefited by Major Skinner's labours, it would be the height of ingratitude not to add my small chirp of thanks to the chorus which is his due.

When he finally left the island in 1867, his fifty years of incessant work was thus summarised in 'The Ceylon Observer': "He has survived to see a magnificent network of roads spread over the country, from the sea-level to the passes of our highest mountain-ranges; and instead of dangerous fords and ferries, where property often suffered and life was too frequently sacrificed, he has lived to see every principal stream in Ceylon substantially bridged, or about to be spanned by structures of stone or iron. Whereas before his time there were, strictly speaking, 'no roads in the island,' Ceylon, with an area of 25,000 miles, can now count nearly 3000 miles of made roads, one-fifth of which consist of first-class metalled roads, and another fifth of excellent gravelled highways."

Add to all this the restoration of inland navigation—that canal system by which we travelled so pleasantly to Puttalam and Kalpitiya—and the impetus given to many another public work, and we have the bare outline of such a life of unselfish usefulness to his fellow-men, as few have been privileged to show.

When we reached the high pass of Kadugannawa, we were on the watershed which divides the tributaries of the Kelani-ganga and Maha-Oya on the west coast from those of the Maha-velli-ganga, which, after a north-easterly course of about 130 miles, enters the sea near Trincomalee.

Descending to Peradeniya Station, we found ourselves on

the brink of that broad still river—the Maha-velli-ganga or Great Sandy river—all fringed with beautiful tufts of feathery bamboo. The old road of which I have just spoken crosses the river by a noble bridge entirely built of satin-wood, constructed in 1832 without the use of a single nail or bolt, and still, to all appearance, as sound as ever. It spans the river with a single arch 205 feet wide, which, when the stream is in its normal condition, stands 70 feet above the water, but in time of flood scarcely clears it by 10 feet.

The railway crosses the stream very near the road-bridge, and a five miles' run would have taken us to Kandy, the mountain capital, 1600 feet above the sea, but that pleasure was reserved for later, after I had visited Nuwara Eliya, "the City of the Open Plain," which is the island sanatorium, and the third Government station—*i.e.*, the third place where the Governor has an official residence. So instead of going north, we turned due south, following the course of the beautiful river to Gampola, which was then the terminus. Now, the railway carries passengers by a much more circuitous route, and easier gradient, right up to Nanu-Oya, which is only five miles from Nuwara Eliya, and 5600 feet above the sea, a considerable rise in a run of 130 miles from Colombo. Nuwara Eliya itself is 6222 feet above the sea. So now the admirably engineered road by which we travelled is comparatively forsaken.

The whole route was beautiful, and to me a delightful novelty was the luxuriance of the fragrant datura with its large white trumpet-shaped blossoms, each 10 or 12 inches in length, of which we think so much if we see a dozen on a greenhouse shrub. Here there were great masses of it growing as freely as our own yellow broom, and 12 or 15 feet in height. Colonists call it the fever-plant, believing

VALLEY OF MAHA-VELLI-GANGA.

Showing the Railway and Satin-wood Bridges at Peradeniya ; Allegalla Peak ; Terraced Rice-Fields ; foreground Coffee and Talipot Palm.

that it produces fever, and so object to its growth near houses, or keep it closely trimmed as a garden hedge. What it does produce is a dangerous drug, which occasionally figures in cases of poisoning. In various instances robbers have induced the family cook or some other person having access to the kitchen, to drop a few pills made of datura-juice into the soup or coffee, and sometimes, to "mak sikker," into every course, so that no one can escape scot-free.

All along the river, the vegetation is a dream of beauty. Tall cocoa, areca, and beautiful kitool palms tower above a rich undergrowth of broad-leaved plantains, ferns, and gay caladiums, or the blue-green of the handsome castor-oil plant,[1] while in some reaches, the gigantic plumes of the ever-graceful bamboo overhang the water. Then perhaps we pass a stretch of vividly green paddy-fields, divided by low terraces of red soil, following every natural curve of the land; so that is never a stiff straight line such as bounds our British fields. And all this, with the reflections in the still river, are only the foreground to a panorama of beautiful hills.

At Gampola a carriage was waiting to take us up-country, but by some mistake no coolies were forthcoming to carry our baggage, none of which overtook us till the following day! We halted at Pussilawa, and ere night reached "The Delta," a charming home with a lovely garden, which in that month of March (bleak March in Britain) was fragrant with the mingled perfume of roses and jasmines, gardenias, honeysuckle, heliotropes, salvias, mignonette, violets, lilies and pinks, myrtles, magnolias, oleanders, and loquat; and gay, moreover, with luxuriant convolvuli, fuchsias, and bignonias, brilliantly variegated caladium leaves, fantastic crotons,

[1] *Palma Christi.*

and beautiful climbing passion-flowers and taesonias, covered with large crimson stars. Add to these many vividly green parrakeets and other birds of bright plumage, and gay butterflies, and perhaps you can realise something of the charm of that garden.

How enchanting was the peace of the following day, resting on dry green turf beneath the cool shade of large orange-trees, laden with green and golden fruit and fragrant blossom, the grass around us strewn with delicious ripe fruit and snowy petals; while beyond the foreground of luxuriant garden-flowers lay undulating hills all clothed with the glossy green of flourishing coffee estates, right up to Peacock Hill, whose broad blue shadows looked temptingly cool contrasted with the hot haze which veiled the low country we had just left!

In this sweet home we halted for three days to enable the Bishop to hold Sunday services at Pussilawa and meet a number of the planters.

Then once more we took the road, gradually rising up the Kotmalee valley, till we reached the foot of the Rambodda Pass, where we found shelter in a comfortable rest-house. Here the ascent commences in real earnest, the rise in the remaining fourteen miles being 3000 feet. The road enters the gorge between two picturesque waterfalls, about a hundred feet in height, one on either hand, their cool white spray being a vision of delight in the scorching heat of noon. Oddly enough, in rainy weather, one of these comes down in turbulent red flood, laden with soil from the hills, while the other remains clear and sparkling. One is the Puna-ella, and the other the Garunda-ella, and both flow down to join the Maha-velli-ganga. Below the bridge the rocks are curiously water-worn into pot-holes of all sizes, like those in

the bed of the Findhorn, which we suppose to be produced by the ceaseless whirling round of shingle.

The road winds up the pass by a succession of steep zigzags at a gradient of about one in fourteen,—very trying for the teams of strong handsome white oxen, which drag up large covered bullock-carts, heavily laden with all luxuries and necessaries of life for Nuwara Eliya—or rather, did so before the completion of the railway to Nanuoya. Formerly this pass was beautifully wooded, and indeed the whole road to Nuwara Eliya lay through dense forest, all of which has long since been felled and burnt to make room for the very monotonous little coffee-bushes, now almost replaced by the equally monotonous tea-bushes. I say "almost" because, taught by dire experience, wise planters no longer carry all their eggs in one basket, so that the cultivation is varied by that of the very ornamental cacao or chocolate trees and other products.

A little above the head of the pass, at a point where the road winds so as to form a huge letter S, stands Pallagolla, a very small bungalow which the Bishop had rented for a couple of months. Here we found Valentine, his excellent Singhalese servant, hard at work making all cosy—a task in which we all lent a hand with some success.

A tiny streamlet flowing through the big family bath assured an ample supply of fresh water, and tempted me out to trace its course. The clear crystal waters glanced so joyously in the bright sunshine as they sped downward to the valley, strewn with snowy petals of fragrant coffee-blossom, that they enticed me farther and farther, till I came to a level patch of tempting green, where the babbling of the stream was hushed; and here, to my delight, I recog-

nised in the luxuriant weed the familiar water-cress, dear through association with so many a sparkling stream and quiet pool in the old mother country.

I confess that to me the charm of water-cresses has been rudely shaken ever since discovering that those I had gathered in one of the sweetest districts of Perthshire were swarming with minute leeches which could scarcely be dislodged even when soaked in salt and water. But that source of danger had not then suggested itself, so I feasted undismayed, and gathered as many as it was possible to carry back.

Then noting a prominent point from which to obtain a good view of the valley, I made my way thither, and of course found it was much farther and steeper than I had imagined, but once there, the glory of sunset colouring was such that I was in no hurry to descend, seeing a path near me, and never doubting that it would lead me straight home. This, you see, was my first evening alone in the coffee country, and little did I dream of the labyrinth of zigzag foot-tracks which checkered those steep hillsides.

I soon realised that the path I had struck was leading me quite astray, and the next I tried was evidently no better. The rapid darkness was fast closing in, when to my great joy I espied a light far below me, and nothing doubting, made that my guiding star. But a few moments later another and another light appeared, and soon glimmering lights surrounded me on every side, a good many seeming stationary, and many more flashing to and fro in a most bewildering manner. (I never now hear the words of "Lead, kindly Light," without a vivid recollection of that evening, when earth's many lights proved so perplexing.)

Of course I quickly realised that the flashing lights were

fire-beetles, and most of the stationary ones glow-worms, including, however, sundry coolies' houses, and my own particular beacon. At last I succeeded in reaching a coolie's house, and hopefully inquired for "Pallagolla?" "Bishop's bungalow?" without eliciting the faintest glimmer of understanding. I had still to learn that the Tamil coolies have names of their own for every estate, and the names by which they are known to Europeans convey no meaning whatever to them. Happily I very soon afterwards struck the high-road at the head of the big S, and that little anxiety was at an end.

Two days later I proceeded up the valley to Nuwara Eliya, first on a visit to the Governor,[1] and afterwards to several other friends, so that the pleasant weeks slipped rapidly by ere I returned to this little nest in the coffee.

[1] Sir William Gregory.

CHAPTER VII.

NUWARA ELIYA.

Spring foliage — Ironwood — Potato - tree — Rhododendron — The patenas—Horton Plains—Lemon-grass—Lake Gregory—Gardens —Church—An exhilarating climate—Various expeditions—Migration of butterflies—Descriptive names—Nillo—Bees—Hak-galla Gardens.

Starting in the cool of early morning (preceded by sundry coolies burdened with my baggage) I walked up-hill to a point where the Governor's carriage awaited me, the drive thence to "The City of the Open Plain" being simply exquisite, the deep wooded gorge of a river something like our own beautiful Findhorn,[1] with dark peat-coloured water, and with foliage tints as vivid as ours in October, but having this advantage, namely, that the brilliant tints—primrose, gold, scarlet, deep crimson, claret, and tender green—are not, as in Britain or America, precursors of death and of leafless winter and frozen forests, but stages in progressive life, where the young scarlet, yellow, and orange coloured foliage of the ironwood and of some other trees,

[1] In Morayshire; the loveliest river in Scotland, whose dark-brown waters flow through deep gorges clothed with birch and fir trees, bird-cherry, wild-cherry, and alder, which in autumn turn scarlet and crimson, green and gold.

turns crimson and purple, bronze and maroon, ere it settles down to the sober greens of maturity.

Such is the inverted order of things in this land of ceaseless summer, where autumn, winter, and spring are terms of no meaning, because Nature carries on her ceaseless work all the year round, and at the same moment that the forest-trees cast their withered leaves, the young fresh foliage is continually bursting into new beauty.

Near Pussilawa we had halted fairly dumb with surprise at the gorgeousness of a whole ironwood-tree,[1] all vividly scarlet, save that its stem and boughs were entirely clothed by a brilliant glossy-green creeper. This pyramid of fire stood close to a large "potato-tree,"[2] so called because its blossoms are exactly like those of our common potato, only thrice their size; and when you see a tree the size of an average oak literally covered with these splendid purple and white blossoms it is something to remember, especially when you chance, as we did, to see beneath it a group of gaily dressed and bejewelled Tamil women and children.

But on the present occasion the "new sensation" lay in the fact that I had attained the region of bright crimson rhododendron-trees, growing side by side with splendid daturas and real tree-ferns, the latter especially luxuriating in every damp ravine. This was quite the end of March, and the rhododendrons were only just beginning to show colour. They did not attain their full glory till the beginning of May, by which time a group of such trees, or a solitary old tree, perhaps forty feet in height, cutting clear against a blue sky, was truly a thing of beauty. I am bound to say, however, that I have seen many rowan-trees[3] in Scot-

[1] *Messua ferrea.*

[2] It belongs to the family of the *Solanaceæ.*

[3] Mountain-ash.

land quite as richly laden with bunches of pure scarlet, and gleaming in the sunlight against as cloudless and blue a sky.

The latter is by no means a marked characteristic of these mountain regions, where I was much struck by the prevalence of cool grey skies, frequent rain, and such misty effects as we are wont to associate with our Scotch Highlands. I am told that in October and November the sun scarcely shines for half an hour at a time, and that the cheerless fogs are really depressing. Nevertheless, the clear intervening days are the loveliest of the year. "The season," however, is from January to the end of May, during which time visitors abound.

As regards the date of the rhododendron flowering, I may mention that when, in the following year, I ascended Adam's Peak at the end of January, I found the trees on the very summit in full beauty. They continue in blossom till about July. There are two distinct varieties. That which grows on the highest elevations, and is said to be peculiar to Ceylon, is a tall tree with small narrow leaves, silvery on the under side. It sometimes grows to a height of about sixty feet, and the twisted gnarled stem is often about eighteen inches in diameter. The commoner sort has broader leaves, which are brown on the under side. Here and there among the general scarlet, one sees a pink variety, and even a few rare trees whose pink blossoms are mottled with white.

The black peaty soil of Nuwara Eliya suits the rhododendron to perfection, and it grows freely along the banks of the main stream, which meanders through the plain, as also beside the numerous tributary rivulets.

I can never forget my first views of this Elysium when, after toiling steadily up-hill to the end of the eleventh mile from Rambodda, we reached the dividing summit 6600 feet

above the sea, which, in the exquisite morning light, lay clear on the horizon beyond a wide expanse of lowland, with the lovely river-gorge for a foreground. This was looking back. Then looking forward through a framework of most luxuriant and fragrant daturas, graceful tree-ferns, and many-coloured foliage, I beheld the charming valley still two miles distant, and about 400 feet lower than the summit where the carriage halted to let horses breathe and human beings admire.

Great must have been the surprise of the first Europeans who, when in pursuit of big game through the dense mountain forests, accidentally discovered this cool, delightful, grassy plain, three miles in length and about eight in circumference, lying in the very heart of the mountains, about 6200 feet above the sea. Singhalese and Hindoo legends account for its existence by saying that the monkey-god Hanuman set fire to this forest when he came to rescue the beautiful queen Sita, wife of Rama, from captivity in the hands of Ravana the demon-king. Hence the beautiful and romantic stream flowing from the plain towards Hak-galla bears the name of Sita Ella.

This, however, is but one of a series of high table-lands (growing only coarse lemon-scented grass, rhododendrons, and a few small shrubs) which lie at different elevations in the midst of this sea of mountain-ranges, like level terraces with precipitous edges, so that they have been likened to a succession of vast ledges. The highest of these, about twenty miles from Nuwara Eliya, and about a thousand feet higher, is known to Europeans as the Horton Plains (so called in honour of Sir Robert Horton), but to the Singhalese as the Maha Eliya or Great Plains, or more literally, "The great cleared place."

They form a level about five miles long by two broad, surrounded by low wooded slopes rising to 7800 feet above the sea-level. The plains are clothed with rank bright-green grass, buttercups, ground orchids, and ferns innumerable. In place of palms we have tall tree-ferns thirty feet in height, their slender black shining stems supporting a crown of fronds twelve feet in length.

Black peat soil favours the luxuriant growth of rhododendrons, and tufts of dwarf bamboo which border clear streamlets, one of which forms the Bilhool-Oya, which flows seaward through Saffragam. Here also rises the Maha-velli-ganga, which hence descends to the low country by a succession of rapids through narrow rocky gorges, each leading to another plain—in all, upwards of a dozen. At each of these the river is transformed from a wild headlong torrent to a broad calm stream, flowing peacefully through grassy levels—favourite pastures for wild deer.

It is a beautiful day's ride from Nuwara Eliya through the forest and across the patenas, and then up Totapella to the pass, whence you look back on Nuwara Eliya far below, and then ride on a couple of miles through forests all bearded with golden moss, till you reach the Horton Plains ready for a sound sleep in a pleasant rest-house.

Here there is ample space for a very much larger sanatorium than Nuwara Eliya, upon far richer soil, and amid incomparably grander scenery, for all along the southern side it ends in precipitous cliffs, forming a perpendicular rock-rampart of about 5000 feet down to the primeval and still beast-haunted forest below. The plains comprise an extent of about twenty square miles of level or gently undulating land, with rich soil capable of growing anything. There is every reason to suppose that ere very long this must

become the true mountain capital, and be to Ceylon what Ootacamund is to Madras—the Elysium to which wives and children of busy men may be sent for as complete a change of climate as is generally necessary. And by the creation of the new railway to Uva, they will be carried in luxurious railway carriages direct from Colombo to a station within three miles of these grand plains.

Even at Nuwara Eliya, which is a thousand feet lower, the pale children who have lost all their roses in the heat of the low country, quickly regain them and look the very picture of health; and thus they may safely be kept in Ceylon till about twelve years of age, when a return to British climate is generally recommended.

But in truth, the doctors of the future will be able to select the exact elevation they deem desirable, for between the Horton Plains and Nuwara Eliya lie the Totapella Plains, about 700 feet lower than the former, while nine miles to the north of Nuwara Eliya, at a somewhat lower level, lie the grassy Elephant Plains; six miles to the west, still somewhat lower, commences the grand district of Dimboola, once forest-clad, but now all under cultivation.

Nine miles to the east of Nuwara Eliya, but about 1500 feet below it, stretches the vast, thickly peopled district of Uva, which has been compared to the Sussex Downs on a gigantic scale, comprising as it does an extent of about six hundred square miles of undulating open grass-land, varied only by the rice crops raised by the miserably poor and hitherto utterly neglected inhabitants of about eight hundred villages scattered over innumerable small valleys. Happily the grass which clothes this grand district is really rich short grass, easy to walk over—a very different matter from the enormously tall rank mana and lemon grasses which grow

in the rich soil below forest-ranges. These far overtop the toiling human being who has to struggle through them, shutting out all breeze, while concentrating the sun on his luckless head; moreover, his hands are sure to be painfully cut by the sharp serrated edges of the grass.

These grand Uva downs are, as it were, a vast mountain terrace, built up above the lowlands, from which they are divided by a mighty boundary of precipitous crags.

Besides these there are several other grassy plateaux, such as the Elk Plains, the Maturata, the Moonstone Plains, the Kondapallé Plain, the Agra, and the Bopatalawa Plains, or Patenas as they are commonly called. They are of all sizes, and lie like islands in the midst of the surrounding sea of forest. The lemon and mana grass with which they are clothed, though affording fair pasture when young, rapidly grow up into coarse tufts seven or eight feet in height, most unpalatable to cattle, so the natives periodically set fire to it, when there ensues a glorious blaze. The sweeping flames rush on with a subdued roar and crackling, and showers of sparks, but so lightly as not to scorch the roots, which are fed by the charcoal thus produced, and only need a few days' rain in order, phœnix-like, to renew their life, and then the blackened hills and plains are clothed with tenderest green, affording fair pasture till the grass again grows too coarse. While short it is gemmed with many a dainty flower. In the month of May true blue-bells of Scotland (campanula—*not* blue hyacinth) abound, as also, on swampy ground, true golden buttercups. In some places the patenas are yellow with a ground orchid, suggesting a field of daffodils with a faint fragrance like primroses. In some places sweet violets grow freely.

In the late autumn, however, after the summer's drought,

the patenas are no longer beautiful, but all clothed with parched yellow grasses, with here and there broad blackened tracts marking where the shepherds have fired the grass for next year's growth.

The natives prepare from the leaves of the lemon-grass a medicinal infusion with a bitter flavour and strong aromatic smell. From it also is manufactured the citronella oil of commerce, which, amongst other useful properties, is effectual in checking the growth of the fungus—a sort of luxuriant mildew—which works such ruin in museums and collections of all sorts.

The grass from which the oil has been distilled is valuable as fuel where firewood has become scarce owing to the wholesale destruction of timber. Now, however, it has been discovered that this refuse from the oil-factories can be turned to profitable account in the preparation of strawboard, for which there is an enormous demand for the manufacture of boxes in which to pack tea for the rapidly increasing export. Another article hitherto deemed useless is the mana-grass which grows so luxuriantly on the hills, from which it has recently been discovered that with the addition of one-fourth of coarse waste-paper or old sacking, a strong flexible millboard can be prepared, much tougher and less brittle than that which is made from wheat-straw. So it appears that these long-despised grasses are likely to take a prominent place among fibre-yielding plants, and to start a new local industry.

These plains do not always exactly correspond to our interpretation of the word. For instance, the Totapella Plains are a most singular geological formation, the so-called plains being closely covered by several hundred grassy conical hills, each about a hundred feet high, like tumuli

of the giants. A deep river winds circuitously amid these, and they are surrounded by forest-covered hills, a group of which occupy the centre of these very unlevel plains.

The soil of these patenas is generally dark and peaty, and the early settlers hoped that it would prove easy of cultivation; but they found that it was so unfertile that literally nothing would grow without such heavy manure as was too costly to be profitable, and that it really paid better to fell and clear forest-land, even with the toil of rooting out every stump, one of which sometimes cost the work of two men for three days!

As we look now on the splendid crops of English vegetables, potatoes, peas, cabbages, carrots, turnips, and beans, the good strawberries and other fruits, and the luxuriant fields of sweet white clover, dear to the busy bees, it is hard to realise all the difficulties and disappointments which Sir Samuel Baker had to face and conquer, when in 1848 he and his brother resolved to establish a real English farm and village on the estate which still bears their name on the Moon Plains at the eastern end of Nuwara Eliya.

They took out a good English bailiff, a blacksmith, and about a dozen emigrants, with all manner of farm implements, machinery, grain, and animals, not forgetting a pack of fox-hounds. When with infinite trouble the soil had been prepared, the first crop of oats was devoured by elk and wild hogs, who here held grand midnight festivals. In like manner the first crop of potatoes was entirely consumed by grubs. The animals almost died of starvation, twenty-six fine bullocks did die of some disease, and five fine Australian horses died the first year. However, patience and perseverance were rewarded in due time, and the scheme, which was at first deemed so foolish, ere long proved eminently suc-

cessful, the naturally unfertile land being found capable, in response to very generous manuring, of yielding four crops of potatoes in the year!

Although the settlement is entirely a creation of the last sixty years, and there is no trace of any ancient building, there is some reason to believe that like many other places in the island, once populous and then totally abandoned, this verdant plain must at one time have been of some importance to the Kandyan kings. The steep descent towards Badulla is still known as "The Path of a Thousand Princes," and leads past "The Valley of Rubies," a name which suggests another hidden source of fame and profit in the days when gem-hunting was a royal monopoly. All these plains are studded with deep pits, telling of ancient as well as modern gem-diggers.

But the chief importance of the high levels in ancient days was their command of the water-supply for irrigation, which was led in every direction by most carefully constructed water-courses, aqueducts, and canals. Traces of these remain in many a spot now visited only by some chance sportsman, and hillsides once carefully terraced and cultivated have now relapsed to their original wild state.

Here it was that Donna Catherina, the child-queen of Kandy (so proclaimed by the Portuguese), found refuge, when in later years she was driven from her stormy throne; but the place does not seem to have been visited by any European till Dr Davy came here in 1819, after which it was forgotten, till rediscovered in 1826, when the Governor, General Barnes, at once resolved to establish a sanatorium here, with barracks and officers' quarters, and to build a residence for himself, all of good solid stone-work. Barnes Hall is to this day one of the best houses in the little

colony of from thirty to forty neat little villas and cottages —not bungalows as in the low-country, but stone-built houses with chimneys, whose "reek" is a very characteristic feature in the landscape. Each stands in its own pleasant garden, and these lie scattered on a succession of grassy knolls, all along the base of the wooded mountains in which the plain lies embosomed.

Right above it tower Kiklomanee and Pidaru-tala-galla; the latter, though not remarkable for beauty of form, is the highest mountain in Ceylon — height, 8295 feet — and is happily still clothed with forest to the very summit,—forest, moreover, which is all hardwood, for we are now quite beyond the region of palms, and there was not a pine or fir tree in the island, till they were recently acclimatised in nursery gardens. Here rises the Nanu-Oya, which forms one of the affluents of the Maha-velli-ganga,[1] but which here is only a sparkling stream meandering through the valley. By means of an artificial embankment at the further end, designed and carried out by Sir William Gregory, a marshy piece of ground, all reeds and rushes, has been transformed into the beautiful little lake which bears his name. (It is said that this whole valley must at some prehistoric time have been the bed of a mountain lake.)

Thanks to the unwearied care of Mr Le Mesurier, Lake Gregory, and also the streams which water the Horton Plains, are now abundantly stocked with carp and trout, some of the latter being over three pounds weight. The breeding-pond was dug out of solid *cabook* (laterite), paved with pebbles, and lined with water-cresses, under which the fry found refuge, and also insects to their liking, including tiny shrimps which abound in the mountain streams, as do

[1] The true source of the Maha-velli-ganga is on Adam's Peak.

also small crabs, which find favour with grown-up trout, but are dangerous to the fry.[1]

Otters also prove such formidable foes to all fresh-water fish that a raid against them is now being made with a view to their extermination. It always seems hard that any interesting wild creature should have to be totally sacrificed for the preservation of game of any sort, whether finny, furred, or feathered, but it is certain that the Nuwara Eliya otters are doomed. On the other hand, there is good hope that if only they can be left undisturbed, the little grebe and other aquatic birds which have already discovered this new high-level lake, may take to it as an habitual haunt, undisturbed by the stately swans which already float on the still waters.

A curious and unexpected benefit resulting from the formation of this lake, now swarming with fish, is a most marked diminution in the legions of bloodthirsty mosquitoes, which formerly bred undisturbed in the marsh. Now each individual carp and trout is on the *qui vive* to secure for itself a share in that daintiest of morsels, mosquito larvæ; and seeing how surprising is the fecundity of the mosquito, it follows that each which is thus consumed, represents the annihilation of a multitude of foes.

In his interesting book on 'Tank Angling in India,' Mr H. S. Thomas says: "One female mosquito laying at the commencement of the year 100 eggs would at the end of the month be found the parent of 100 mosquitoes, of which 50

[1] Mr Le Mesurier's care for the fish-supply of the colony is not confined to fresh-water pools and streams. He has shown that an inexhaustible harvest of excellent grey mullet, one of the best of sea-fish, might easily be secured by a simple system of barriers to protect the spawn and young fry, which are hatched in inlets so far inshore that during their infancy they might easily be thus guarded from predatory fish and native fishermen.

would be females. In the second month 50 females, laying each 100 eggs, would yield 5000 larvæ. In the third month 2500 females × 100 eggs = 250,000 larvæ. In the fourth 12,500,000 larvæ, and so on, until at the end of the twelve months there would be 488,281,250,000,000,000,000 larvæ."

The lesson to be practically applied would seem to be that all mosquito-breeding tanks and pools should be cleaned, cleared of all predatory fish, and stocked with carp, which seem to multiply almost as rapidly as the mosquitoes, and will therefore supply never-failing armies to do battle with our foes.

The change of climate from Colombo to Nuwara Eliya is surprising. Here, within 7° of the equator, I believe the thermometer never exceeds 72° Fahr. at noon in summer, and at night it sometimes falls below freezing-point, so that in the early morning I have often seen the ground white with hoar-frost, and have been thankful for a thick plaid and a warm tweed dress, and this not only in the chill of frosty mornings and evenings, but even at noon on many a cold rainy day. Snow is of course absolutely unknown in Ceylon. For the first week after my arrival the rainfall was excessive, pouring as if the very heavens were coming down—pitiless pouring rain—and the ceaseless drip, drip, drip from the soaked thatch was most depressing. Weak corners were revealed by unsightly leaks, the ground was saturated, and the paths were all muddy rivulets. Sketching was hopeless, and I fully appreciated the reasons why houses here are built of stone and have fireplaces, with fires morning and evening, round which friends gather as naturally as if in Europe.

The heavy rainfall fills the numerous clear brown streams

which rush down every ravine of the dark hills, and very gloomy these often seem when capped with gathering clouds and grey drift, clothing the green forests in sombre purple and blue shadows; but when the sun conquers, then you have a climate like that of our very loveliest summer days in Scotland: the crisp clear air is so marvellously invigorating and inspiriting that every breath is an elixir, and the mere fact of existence is a delight, renewed with every breath of an atmosphere so exhilarating that even the feeblest folk find themselves endued with exhaustless energies.

Mornings, evenings, and moonlight are each more enchanting than words can tell, and all alike perfumed with the breath of English clover from cultivated fields, mingling with that of mignonette, musk, stocks, pansies, violets, lilies, carnations, phloxes, sweet-peas, honeysuckle, azaleas, and all manner of fragrant garden flowers; and you look up from gardens, where heavenly roses, geranium, fuchsia, chrysanthemum, camellias, and heliotrope are luxuriant bushes, to the beautiful mountains encircling the plain, where the sparkling rivulet winds about through thickets of wild roses, yellow wattle imported from Australia, golden gorse —real whins, exactly the same as our own, fragrant and home-like — with foxgloves and blue-bells, brambles and bracken, growing side by side with the magnificent tree-ferns and the scarlet rhododendron-trees, and masses of snowy datura, the latter dipping in the stream their graceful boughs, heavy with the weight of beautiful trumpet-shaped blossoms. And of minor flowers, there are our own buttercup, foxglove, and common white clover, and white violets (which, however, are scentless), and a most fascinating wild passion-flower, pure white, and enfolded in a mossy calyx just like a white moss-rose.

Conspicuous among these wild plants are the osbekia, laden with lilac blossom, and the tall stiff spikes of a pink lobelia, and of a pale yellow mullen (the Aaron's rod of our gardens, only twice as tall).

You must not imagine, however, that gardening even at Nuwara Eliya is all play. Were it only the ceaseless battle with divers insects, the work would be no sinecure. A gentleman who was admiring the glories of the gorgeous gladioli in the garden of the Grand Hotel in November, observed several women busy collecting black grubs, and was told that in the previous week they had collected on an average three thousand grubs daily in that one garden! And that is only one detail of trouble.

A week of perfect weather before Easter produced such a wealth of blossom as made church decoration a real pleasure, especially where there were so many willing hands to help. This year, 1891, I hear the decorations were lovelier than ever, as you may judge by a few details. There were texts on backgrounds of moss or of scarlet; the font was decked with white arums, marguerites, daisies, and ferns; the chancel trellised with creepers, maiden-hair ferns, arum-lilies, and scarlet geranium. In the chancel-window was a cross of Black Douglas geraniums, and the altar-rails were entwined with ferns and bunches of cream-coloured roses and crimson poppies. The pulpit and lectern were adorned with arum-lilies, ferns, and crimson cacti, the reading-desk with cream-coloured carnations, arums, daisies, and ferns.[1]

[1] The thanksgiving services in June, at the Cathedral, Colombo, as the equivalent of a "Harvest Home," were also pretty and characteristic, the church being adorned with wreaths of the glossy green coffee and cinnamon, with a profusion of pine-apples, shaddocks, brinjals, bunches of oranges, lemons, and limes, green and yellow cocoa and areca nuts, graceful pepper, and lovely nutmegs, and, in short, all manner of tropical "fruits of the earth."

THE CHURCH AT NUWARA ELIYA.

So the flower-angels had their full share as ministering spirits at the great festival :—

> " O the beautiful flowers, the sweet fragrant flowers,
> These dear loving smiles from our Father above ;
> To earth they are given to teach us of heaven :
> They bloom round our pathway to whisper of love,
> THESE BEAUTIFUL SMILES OF GOD."

The pretty little cruciform church and the peaceful churchyard lie in a pleasant sheltered corner, surrounded by rhododendrons, daturas, and other flowering-shrubs, and overshadowed by one grand old tree with a gnarled twisted stem, such as one sometimes sees in miniature on very rank heather. At a little distance it is hard to believe that this is not a veritable stone-pine. I was told, however, that it is a eugenia, of the myrtle family. Happily in the clearing of the forest on the lower hills a considerable number of these have been spared, and, together with groups of tall dark trees resembling cypresses, have all the effect of the non-existent pines and firs.

Of course wherever Government makes its headquarters for the season, there white men and women congregate ; and so during these spring months, until the end of May, each of the nest-like homes encircling the plain is well filled, and a most cheery social life is kept up, picnics and races, games, balls, and dinner-parties, enlivening both day and night. This continues until the end of May, when, the stormy south-west monsoon being almost due, the Cottage itself—*i.e.*, the Governor's house—is deserted, and his Excellency adjourns to Kandy, there to celebrate the Queen's birthday. Then within a very few days this sweet spot is forsaken of the gregarious multitude, and those who do remain settle

down to the peace and quietness of their pleasant Highland homes.

Now that Nuwara Eliya, in common with most of the principal European stations in Ceylon, has started a golf-course, it has secured an additional all-the-year-round attraction in the eyes of many. But there certainly is no reason why it should ever be forsaken on the mere score of climate, for although howling wind, drizzling rain, and heavy white mists prevail in June and July, August has many warm, bright, clear days, and then till the end of November the climate is as variable as the same months would be in Britain; but with one singular advantage for Nuwara Eliya—namely, that no matter what storms sweep over it and the hills towards Colombo, or how dark the clouds which rest on Hak-galla, there is sure to be a bright blue sky beyond it, telling of clear sunshine on the Uva hills and the country towards Badulla, so that any one who wearies of rain has only to ride about four miles in that direction to find himself beneath a cloudless sky with all the mists behind him. Of course these green hills get their turn of rain in the other monsoon.

The great feature of "the season" is the Jymkana, when as many of the planters as can possibly snatch a brief holiday from their estates, flock to Nuwara Eliya, and of course try how much fun can possibly be crammed into the time. Nowhere have I ever met a whole community so thoroughly genial and hearty, or in which the affectation of *blasé*-ness is so totally unknown. As for any women-folk attempting to play the dowagers, the thing was impossible; for so many of these exiled Britons had ridden thirty or forty miles on purpose for a dance, that they would dance with one another rather than sit out, so, under such circum-

stances, feminine indolence would have been downright selfishness.

Nothing short of an atmosphere so amazingly invigorating as that of these mountains could enable any average mortal to get through so much exertion without fatigue. Perhaps I cannot prove this better than by quoting a few passages from my diary, first remarking that at that time there was only one carriage in Nuwara Eliya, so that almost every one walked to and from all evening entertainments, and also that eight dances and divers other entertainments were crowded into three weeks. The presence of the band of the 73d Highlanders was the chief incentive to such an outburst of frolic.

Here, then, is one morning: "Out sketching before daybreak, returning home at noon. Afternoon standing about at games. Dinner and dance till 2 A.M. Out sketching by 6 A.M."

Another day: "Staying at Headquarters House—*i.e.*, of the general in command. At 6 A.M. the Governor's carriage came to take me to breakfast at the Cottage. Rode with his Excellency, by a somewhat steep jungle-path, to the top of 'Pedro,' the highest mountain in Ceylon. Its real name is Pidura-tala-galla, which means 'the mat-weaving rock.' It was so called on account of a sort of rush which was abundant here and was used for making mats.

"From the summit we literally overlooked the whole Isle, the sea being clearly visible both to the east and west. Before us, as on a map, lay outstretched the intricate mountain-ranges clothed with dark-green forest,[1] brighter green marking the coffee plantations, and a still lighter tint the mountain meadows called patenas, with silvery lines and glittering mirrors indicating streams and pools. In the

[1] Almost the whole of which has now vanished before the advance of the planter's axe.

wonderful stillness we heard the voices of many mountain torrents rushing tumultuously down the rocky ravines and gullies.

"On the summit we found wild strawberry plants and forget-me-nots; and as we walked leisurely down the mountain, I gathered buttercups, yellow St John's wort, small geraniums, real "blue-bells of Scotland" (NOT blue hyacinths!) and a sort of ranunculus. Scented purple violets are sometimes found, but I sought for them in vain.

"After breakfast drove back to Headquarters House, whence in the afternoon we all walked a mile to the races and back again, standing about all the afternoon. Walked to a dinner-party at one house, whence the whole party walked to a ball at another. Thence at 4 A.M. all walked home across the plain in the most lovely moonlight. I was out again by 9 A.M., sketching till noon.

"Up at 5 A.M. Rode to the top of Pedro, and sent the horses back. Sketched as much as was possible of that vast panorama, with Adam's Peak conspicuous above the many mountain-ranges, and a somewhat desolate foreground of ghostly dead trees, scorched by some accidental fire, but still standing, bleached by many a wintry storm and summer sun, and bearded with long trails of grey moss and lichens. But the view from a mountain-top is not very sketchable, being rather suggestive of a petrified ocean, as if liquid waves had been suddenly transformed to solid rock ridges, fixed and immovable.

"Walked back, a distance of four miles, and found all the party busy decorating the ball-room, in which I gave a helping hand. Dancing till 4 A.M. Out sketching beside the river by 9 A.M."

One lovely morning we started early—a very pleasant

party—to ride twelve miles through the loveliest jungle to Ragalla, where it had been arranged that we should all sleep in a tiny bungalow built by a planter who had just commenced clearing a coffee estate. Such a scene of havoc! The lovely jungle ruthlessly burnt down, and the charred and blackened trunks of huge old trees lying on the ground, their grand boughs all turned to charcoal, slowly feeding the wretched little coffee shrubs which were planted all over the ground.

After luncheon the Government Agent invited me to come and see a grand view of the Maturata Plains; it was some way off, but he didn't know how far. Being quite fresh, I was of course ready to see as much as possible, so we started, riding the first four miles, till the road became impassable for horses, so we had to walk the rest of the way, which proved to be four miles more! (In Britain in my best days a three-mile walk has always been my full day's work, so you see what credit belongs to this glorious climate of Nuwara Eliya!)

Happily my kind friend had had the forethought to send up a chair on poles, and coolies to carry me; so after thoroughly enjoying the magnificent view, in all the grandeur of a most awesome thunderstorm, I was carried down. Long before we got through the jungle it was pitch-dark, and we had to halt while the coolies manufactured *chules*—*i.e.*, torches like small fagots of dried sticks, which they feed with frequent applications of cocoa-nut oil.

In the morning we all started at 6 A.M., the rest of the party having to return direct to Nuwara Eliya; but I halted by myself for some hours *en route* to secure a sketch of a lovely jungle scene. Of course I was not literally alone, for here, as in India, every horsekeeper is always bound to be in

attendance on his own horse, and is supposed to keep up with the rider, whatever may be the pace, and very hard running that involves, even when humane new-comers make excuses for dawdling, to give them a chance, especially after an irresistible canter.

Whenever one leaves the beaten track one is of course liable to find jungle-paths in a very dubious condition. Of this we had good experience one day, when a friend undertook to guide me to a very fine sketching-point beyond the Elk Plains. So we started, as usual, at 6 A.M., and rode round the back of beautiful Hak-galla and across the patenas, which, having been recently burnt, were in all the loveliness of the freshest young green, but fringed with scorched jungle.

We expected to reach our destination before 9 A.M., but to our unmitigated disgust found that the jungle-path had never been overhauled for six years! and the distance proved to be upwards of twelve miles. We could not go beyond a slow walk the whole way, and I had literally to dismount upwards of twenty times to let the horse be led over impracticable bits of broken bank.

At 1 P.M. we had not reached the point where my companion had purposed leaving me for the day, so there was nothing for it but to rest awhile and then retrace our ground. That was indeed an exhausting day, nine and a half hours in the saddle, only varied by the fatigue of incessantly mounting and dismounting. To add to the situation, a tremendous thunderstorm came on, which certainly was very grand, but followed by such downpouring rain as was supremely disagreeable; for it was not nice returning to civilised life like drowned rats to meet all the smart people taking their walk in the beautifully clear evening.

(It really is extraordinary to see what trouble people do

give themselves, even in Paradise, to keep up with the changes of the very latest fashions—all the newest Parisian millinery, dresses from Worth, and kid gloves fresh by every mail! Common-sense and comfort plead alike in favour of no gloves and the simplest attire, in a climate whose warm moisture promotes such rapid vegetation that a very few days suffice to mildew gloves and silk dresses, and to coat boots and broad-cloth with fungus half an inch in length! Clothes of all sorts are ruined unless they are perpetually being aired in the sun, and clothes left lying by are simply destroyed. Consequently, for people living in remote parts of the country, a visit to Kandy or Colombo involves grave considerations as to the adorning of the outer man or woman!)

Here, as in most hilly districts, there is a good deal of swampy morass in the hollows, and one of the dangers to be avoided in riding along vague tracks is that of getting bogged in soft peaty soil, a most disagreeable experience which I narrowly escaped while riding up Mount Kiklomani. We came to a bit of dubious-looking ground, and I fortunately insisted on getting off, for it proved to be a most treacherous bog, in which a moment later the poor beast was floundering, and was only extricated with much difficulty. I was truly thankful that the owner himself was there in charge, for, indeed, the anxious responsibility of riding a borrowed horse is serious, and some of the difficult jungle-paths, and those along the face of steep hillsides, did try my nerves to an unwarrantable extent, and a small stumble often made me hotter than I would have cared to confess.

Of pleasant picnics, large and small, there was no end. One was beside a lovely still pool, fed by a rippling stream working its way among moss-grown boulders; on the pool

shone the snowy cups of a multitude of floating lilies, deeply shaded by the overhanging foliage—an ideal of sleepy loveliness. Blue and green dragon-flies, and occasionally a scarlet one, hovered over the lilies or skimmed across the pool, and butterflies of gorgeous hue assembled (holding parliament, we said) in the cool damp of many a shady green nook.

The butterflies of Ceylon are so beautiful and so varied as to be at all times a joy, whether seen singly, when one glorious creature seems for a moment to have the garden to himself, or in companies of radiant joyous little beings. One of the mysteries of the Isle is the annual migration in November and December, and at intervals right on to February, of countless myriads of butterflies in vast flights; whence they come and whither going, no one can guess.

The migration commences with the setting in of the north-east monsoon, with its cool mornings and bright days; and when the stormy wind blows strongest, these delicate insects, impelled by some inexplicable instinct, force their way against it, and during a couple of months successive legions pass on like an ever-flowing stream. I have collected a few notes of observations made on this subject in different years.

Thus, in 1884, swarms of dark-coloured butterflies passed over Kandy and Ratnapura on the 19th November. On the following day these were succeeded by swarms of white and yellow ones.

In 1887, Mr Le Mesurier, writing from Nuwara Eliya, noted the first flight of the season on 18th November. The flight lasted the whole day; direction from due south-west to north. Wind from south-west. Colour of butterflies, speckled dark brown.

The next flight he noticed was on 21st November, when two kinds of butterflies, white and sulphur, continued all day

passing right over the summit of Pedro from north to due south. The direction of the wind was from the north-east.

On the 10th December another observer stated that brown and white butterflies had been in flight for some days, flying south.

In 1888, the migration northward in the teeth of the wind was observed at Colombo on November 18, the great flight of white and yellow butterflies being mingled with some of a darker colour.

In 1889, flights were observed in the mountain district of Dimbula, about the middle of October, and at Colombo on November 5, when dark-brown butterflies and yellowish-white ones flew in separate columns at a rate of about ten miles an hour.

All the accounts (which might be multiplied by observations from all parts of the island, north, south, east, and west, from Manaar to Galle, and from Trincomalee to Negombo) speak only of brown, white, and yellow insects; hence I infer that the glorious butterflies which most delighted us do not risk becoming food for fishes by any such venturesome flights. There is one lovely creature with black velvety wings spotted with crimson, and measuring about four inches from tip to tip; while another likewise robed in black velvet has brilliant yellow spots on the under-wing, and yet another of the sombre sort has black velvet upper-wings with lovely blue under-wings. Others are of a lustrous pale-blue, or a rich metallic purple or green, and some are pure white. The most delicate of all has semi-transparent wings, and is so exquisitely refined that it is generally known as the sylph.

Then at sunset these radiant creatures disappear, and handsome hawk-moths and humming-bird moths dart to and fro

in the twilight, to be succeeded an hour later by various night-moths, whose beauty is lost to us in the darkness, their presence only revealed by a rushing flight, too often in the direction of lamps and candles. Many of the moth and butterfly caterpillars are exceedingly handsome and brightly coloured. All these, however, are far more abundant in the low country than in this cooler region.

Many fascinating birds also did their part in giving life and colour to the beautiful scene, a specially lovely family being the jays with their brilliantly blue body and tail, and golden-sienna head and wings. They go about in flocks of six or eight, and are very shy of human beings, so they are warily silent while on the ground feeding on beetles, but make up for this by harsh croaking cries when on the tree-tops.

One of the favourite amusements at Nuwara Eliya was "gemming"—*i.e.*, devoting a day to washing gravel in various places where it was likely that moonstones and garnets might be found. It was scarcely to be expected that this playing at work would prove very successful, but amateur seekers are easily pleased, and they invariably brought home a certain number of promising crystals, some of which it was hoped might turn out treasures; in fact, several unusually fine moonstones were found in the gravelly bed of some of the streams. These when polished certainly are lovely stones, of a lustrous pearly white, really suggestive of moonlight, and when set in silver they make charming ornaments. But in common with garnets and amethysts, they are little valued, simply because they are abundant.

We had a very pleasant picnic, enlivened by the 73d band playing Scotch music, on some grassy downs known to the British as the Bully-hilly Patenas, which I need scarcely

say is not their real name, but one of those senseless approximations to sound in which the Anglo-Saxon delights, and by which the really descriptive native names are so ruthlessly superseded. For instance, what can be more detestable than "Mutton Button" as the name for a beautiful hillside visible from Kandy? Yet this is the foreigner's corruption of Mattena Patena, "the shining meadow."

And many of the native names afford a clue to ancient legends or topographical changes: thus, Yakka-galla is "the demon's rock"; Dee-wuran-gaha, "the tree of the oath," marks the spot where once stood a very sacred bo-tree; Nuga-talawa is "the banyan-tree plain"; Bogaha-watte tells of another bo-tree felled by ruthless planters; Kehel-watte suggests the wild plantains of olden days. At Malegawa-tenne, "the palace-flat," tradition affirms that Ravanna the demon once had a palace; now it is a rice-field through which flows a river. Nanda-nodiyana, "the pleasure-ground," is the name of a mountainous district to the east of Nuwara Eliya, in which the aforesaid demon (or deified hero) is supposed to have taken delight. The Malwatte-oya is the river of the Garden of Flowers; the Kalu-ganga is the Black River. The Maha-velli-ganga is the Great Sandy River; the Dik-oya is the Long River. Hak-galla is said to be a contraction of Yakkada-galla, and to mean "the iron rock." Certainly the amount of iron in the soil of the district is remarkable, and sensibly affects vegetation, being excellent for tea but destructive to cinchona; but I think Hak-galla is much more likely to be another "demon's rock."

Mandara-nuwara, "the city of the shadow," is the very poetic name of a village in a gloomy valley at the base of Pidura-tala-galla. (I have already mentioned that the

name of this mountain describes the rushes there gathered for weaving mats.) Monara-galla describes the Rock of the Peacock. Bintenne, so frequently referred to in sporting annals, is difficult to locate till we realise that the name simply describes sloping wooded foot-hills, answering to the Terai of India. What a new interest attaches to the Laxapana estate in Maskeliya when we learn that it derives its name from Laxapana-galla, "the mountain of the hundred thousand lamps," so called because at its base bands of pilgrims to Adam's Peak congregate and at midnight light their lamps, preparatory to ascending the holy mount, so as to reach its summit before the rising of the sun! But I need not multiply examples to endorse my protest against the useless vulgarising of descriptive names.

Of course half the charm of every expedition lay in hunting for new wild-flowers, and great was the pleasure of discovering the "gold" and "silver" backed ferns of our greenhouses, growing wild in profusion. Calceolarias and red and white balsams had also the interest of being old friends, but one of my chief jungle treasures was altogether new to me, a wax-like lilac-pink creeper, which clings like a veil to the very top of many a tall forest-tree, but is so capricious in its growth that though several planters told me they had tried to induce it to live when transplanted to their gardens, none had succeeded in doing so. Each blossom is the size of a florin and has four petals. I was told its name was Kandrikia Walkerii.

A less ambitious beauty is the water-balsam, which grows in many of the streams; the Singhalese call it *diya nilla*, and say that its crushed leaves are as efficacious as a mustard-poultice, and very beneficial in cases of neuralgia and lumbago. Owners of white skin, however, are warned

that these easily prepared blisters leave a black stain which is not ornamental, but may be lessened or prevented by placing a piece of linen next the skin.

Much to my regret I did not see these high jungles in their fullest glory, for that only occurs once in seven years, when a whole clan of flowering shrubs (of the *Strobilanthes* family), called by the Singhalese *nillo*, burst forth into most fragrant blossom. Some of these are delicate dwarf plants, others have a stem as thick as a man's arm, and grow to a height of about twenty feet; all are jointed canes growing in single stalks, and bear their honeyed blossoms in clusters round the joints. The different varieties bear white, blue, red, and purple flowers, while some are particoloured, crimson, and white. To add to the charm of the forests at this season, there is often an undergrowth of gorgeous scarlet and yellow blossoms, gleaming like fire among the jointed roots of the nillo.

These slim and perfectly upright stems form a dense underwood in many of the mountain forests, and this, in the case of the species which grows to about twenty feet in height, is so thick as to be almost impenetrable. Elephants force their way through it, leaving long lanes which often prove very convenient to puny human beings. Its only foliage is on the extreme summit, where a few small branches bear the leaves, and every seventh year, in the early spring, produce rich clusters of white and purple blossom, so fragrant as to perfume the whole atmosphere with a scent of honey, attracting large swarms of bees, which appear as if by magic in jungles where, perhaps, scarcely one has been in the previous six years.

To save themselves time and trouble, the bees, of which there are four different sorts in Ceylon, construct their nests

in hollow trees or holes in the rock. One suspends a small nest no bigger than an orange from the boughs of a tree, offering a tempting prize both to bears and men. The latter prepare torches of green leaves, and with their heavy smoke stupefy these poor workers, whose well-filled honeycombs they can then abstract, carrying them to market in hollow gourds slung on ropes. The combs differ in size and in quality according to the manufacturer—for the four varieties of honey-bees vary from one kind the size of a hornet, to another smaller than our house-fly.

One of these, *Apis dorsata* (which is also found in Java), is said to be the largest and longest-tongued of all bees, and the only one able to extract the honey from certain flowers in which it lies deeply seated, just as in Britain only the bumble-bee can reach the honey concealed in the long tubes of the red-clover blossom.

Speaking of hornets, those of Ceylon are very large, and have reddish-brown wings, and a most ferocious sting. They make themselves useful by eating cockroaches, but are dreaded by the lightly draped natives, whom they sometimes attack savagely. I am told that when natives are attacked by wild bees, if there are any castor-oil bushes in the neighbourhood, they run to take shelter in them, as the discriminating bees avoid those handsome shrubs.

The marvel is that they are not attacked more frequently, as a common way of taking honey is simply to blow into the nest, when the astonished bees fly out, and the robber quietly appropriates the honey! Of the abundance of honey thus obtained one may form some idea from a fact mentioned by Sir Samuel Baker—namely, that having given a native permission to hunt for honey in his forest on condition of bring-

ing him the wax, the hunter in a very few weeks brought seventy-two pounds of pure white wax made up in large balls. Sir Samuel assumed that the amount really taken was probably at least double this.

When the bees have had their day among the nillo blossoms, then comes the turn of flocks of pigeons, squirrels, rats, and other creatures, who congregate to celebrate their septennial festival of nillo nuts, which are as pleasant to the taste as was the delicious fragrance of the blossom to the sense of smell.

The nut festival being over, the whole of the nillo dies, leaving only a standing array of tall leafless poles. Ere long these decay and fall to the ground, and the forest then presents the curious appearance of having no underwood save confused piles of dead sticks. Soon, however, a fresh crop of young nillo springs up, in succulent verdure, very attractive to elk and other deer, who do their best to thin the too luxuriant growth. Enough, however, escapes them to secure a renewed promise of perfumed forests, when six more years shall have rolled away.

Several of the larger kinds of bamboo share this peculiarity of only flowering periodically and gregariously; the smaller bamboos flower annually, but the very graceful kind[1] which adorns the swamps on the high patenas all seem to attain maturity simultaneously, and then "the grace of the fashion of it perisheth," and for a while the swamps are strewn only with prostrate withered stems, till a new generation arise and start fair on their little span of life.

About five miles to the east of Nuwara Eliya rises the majestic mountain of Hak-galla—a very conspicuous feature as seen from the settlement, towering beyond Lake Gregory,

[1] *Arundinaria densifolia.*

and especially fine as seen from Baker's farm looking down on the intervening grassy valley. It is a grand massive pile about 7000 feet in height, all forest-clad, with deeply indented saddle, the seaward face descending to the vast plains of Uva in almost precipitous crags.

Nestling at the base of one of these crags, which towers above it in a sheer precipice of 1600 feet, lie the Government Botanical Gardens, 5400 feet above the sea-level. They are not only beautiful for situation, but very beautiful in themselves, and commanding a magnificent view of the hills and valleys of Uva. The gardens lie on a steep slope facing north-east, sheltered by the great crag from tempestuous monsoon blasts, and always subject to ample rainfall. Like the mists which watered Eden, so here mists roll up from the low country dreamy and still, and float spirit-like, enfolding each separate tree and shrub in a cool filmy veil.

Here experiments are made as to the possibility of acclimatising plants from tropical mountains and from the plains of temperate lands—America, Europe, and Australia—so you come on all manner of surprises. There are flourishing young pine-trees from the Himalayas, cypresses and cedars (cryptomerias) from Japan, araucarias and plane-trees from Australia, and all manner of European fruit-trees, peaches and plums, apple and pear trees. As to Australian gum-trees, which were grown here in the first instance, they have fairly taken possession of the land, and are now grown for fuel on estates where all the natural forests had been wholly swept away.

Here I saw fine experimental plantations of cinchona (quinine), which soon afterwards came so gallantly to the front, when King Coffee had come to utter grief. But the reign of cinchona proved all too brief, its very triumph proved its

undoing, and the market was so effectually glutted that its price would not pay for its cultivation. Growing among it were masses of wild fuchsia—the sort with a long scarlet tube. And in every direction there were flowers, flowers, flowers—roses, irises, lilies, and a multitude of others, with here and there open spaces of green turf and ferns.

Right above this towered the majestic crag, and in a cleft of the rock something is pointed out which is said to be the skull of an inquisitive elephant, who, not satisfied with climbing to the top of the mountain forest, must needs look over the precipice, and lost his balance. Certainly elephants seem to take an unaccountable pleasure in climbing mountains which one would imagine to be inaccessible to them. Both Major Skinner in 1840 and Hoffmeister in 1844 record having found the unmistakable proofs of elephants having climbed almost to the very summit of Adam's Peak, up and down those steep paths which human beings find so difficult; and Major Forbes Leslie says that he has known three instances, in the Matele district alone, of elephants being killed by falling down precipices.

Sir Samuel Baker used frequently to come on the tracks of elephants "on the precipitous sides of jungle-covered mountains near Nuwara Eliya, where the ground is so steep that a man is forced to cling to the underwood for support," and where the jungle was so dense that neither man nor elephant could see a yard before them. He observed that their immense weight resting on such large feet, with their edging of sharp horny toes, fairly cut steps on the almost precipitous hillsides; and moreover, whether ascending or descending, the wise beasts invariably moved by zigzags, and thus lessened the abruptness of the incline.

CHAPTER VIII.

ELEPHANTS.

God's Acre—Major Rogers' grave—Elephants—Export of elephants—Leopards—Sambur deer or elk—Red deer—Moose deer—Spotted deer.

There is one spot at Nuwara Eliya which to me has a very pathetic interest—namely, the neglected old burial-ground where sleep so many of the early pioneers. Brackens and other ferns, tall spikes of lobelia, and trails of bramble, veil many a nameless grave and long-neglected monument, overshadowed by kindly trees.

It is a sweet sunny spot, and I came on it by chance while seeking for the best point from which to sketch the Governor's cottage, with the grand blue cone of Kiklomani as a background, and to the right the dark wooded range at the base of Pidura-tala-galla.

The monuments are in the solid brick and mortar and stone style, which certainly lack beauty till the softening touch of time has clothed them with mosses and lichens. But one[1] has a very peculiar interest, having been riven

[1] The monuments next to this bear the names of Ebenezer Gordon Munro, Sir William Rough, Colonel Peddie, and Edward Septimus Hodges of Dorchester.

asunder by lightning, which, strange to say, was also the cause of the death of him whose body rests here—namely, Major Rogers of the Ceylon Rifles, of whom the stone records that he was "Stricken to death in the Happootalle Pass on the 7th of June 1845, aged forty-one years." He was long commandant of the little fort at Badulla, in the heart of the country, which in those days was so overrun by all manner of destructive wild animals that the sportsman who could best thin their ranks, and especially those of the crop-devouring and all-destroying herds of wild elephants, was the truest benefactor of mankind—a fact which it is essential to bear in mind in view of the amazing number of about 1600 elephants which fell to Major Rogers' own rifle. He kept count of each up to 1300, and after that gave up reckoning, but the extra 300 is considered well within the mark. Up to about 1840 it was by no means uncommon for a man to have killed a hundred elephants to his own gun.

In these days when sportsmen have to pay ten rupees—equal to about 15s.—for a special licence for each separate elephant they shoot, those who cannot realise the totally changed conditions of these forest districts in the last fifty years are very apt to talk about "wholesale massacre" and "useless cruelty." If those who blame the pioneers so readily could have spent a few years with my brother at Batticaloa, and seen something of the ever-recurring heart-breaking devastation of his cocoa-nut plantations by the elephant legions, they might understand why it was that in those days Government offered a reward of 10s. for the destruction of each of the great hungry creatures, whose carcasses helped to manure the crops they sought to devour.

Of course it is pitiful to think of the many poor beasts which merely serve as targets for unskilful shots, and are left

to die in slow torture in Eastern forests or British coverts, but certainly in that respect Major Rogers was peculiarly happy, for his aim was so unerring that comparatively few creatures which received his first bullet survived to suffer long.

Elephant-shooting in Ceylon is, however, a very different matter from what it is in Africa—the Asiatic elephant being so much smaller, and so rarely possessed of tusks. Out of the legion slain by Major Rogers only about sixty were tuskers, and of these, few had ivory equal to average African tusks—the large majority being only provided with small tushes like those of the females, rarely exceeding six inches in length, and projecting with downward curve. These are frequently broken or worn down, but are still useful to the animal in barking trees or otherwise amusing itself.

In India as in Ceylon, the female elephant never has tusks, but a much larger proportion of males in the forests of the mainland are thus endowed. In Africa both male and female have good ivory, a tuskless elephant being comparatively rare. My brother Roualeyn, when in South Africa, secured one tusk 10 feet 8 inches in length, and which weighed 173 lb. In India a tusk 5 feet in length and weighing 36 lb. is considered exceptionally fine, though there is a tradition of a tusk weighing 90 lb., and 8 feet in length.

The Asiatic elephant differs in many respects from its great African kinsman. The latter has a projecting forehead and high skull; its enormous ears actually meet over the shoulders: whereas the forehead of the Indian elephant is actually sunken, and its skull is so depressed on the summit that it forms two distinct humps. The ears are very much smaller than those of the African, and less useful as

fly-flaps. But the animal is altogether smaller, and its legs are shorter in proportion to its size.

A singular difference between the elephant of Ceylon and that of the mainland is that the former (like that of Sumatra), though distinctly smaller than the Indian elephant, is nevertheless provided with an extra pair of ribs and dorsal vetebræ, the Indian having nineteen of each and the Ceylon elephant having twenty.

With regard to height, it is somewhat disillusioning to ascertain how much smaller elephants in general are than they are represented in most picture-books. Colonel Forbes-Leslie says that during eleven years, during which he had charge of an establishment in Ceylon for the capture of elephants, he found that out of several hundred, only three exceeded nine feet in height.

Even in India, Mr Sanderson, a very great authority, states that out of hundreds of elephants he has measured, the largest has never exceeded 10 feet 7½ inches. He says he has often heard of enormous elephants, but has invariably found that when subjected to the measuring-tape, they (with the single exception above noticed) never exceeded 10 feet in height. He inserted a request for information on the subject in Indian newspapers, and offered an order on any gun-maker for the best double-barrelled rifle, to any one who could produce evidence of an elephant even 11 feet high. Accounts of giants poured in, but none stood the test of inquiry.

The African elephant slightly exceeds this average. A new-born baby elephant stands about 3 feet in height. They are dark-brown hairy creatures, but they soon rub off their hair, and become lighter in colour.

There are records of elephantine "Changs"—giants which are said to have attained to a height of 20 feet. The inaccuracy

of over-estimation may, however, account for these figures as well as for more recent errors. But in the museum at St Petersburg there is a skeleton, 16½ feet high, of an elephant sent to the Czar Peter by the King of Persia.

Fossil remains also have been found at Jubbulpore of elephants which must have measured fully 15 feet to the shoulder.

In our own Oxford Museum are the vertebræ and thigh-bone of one which must have stood at least 16 feet. It was found at Abingdon, together with bones of the rhinoceros and various species of deer. At Hoxton, too, a skull was dug up with tusks of enormous length, and most of the large teeth perfect. Similar fossil remains of elephantine skeletons and teeth have been dug up in the very streets of London, Oxford, and various other parts of England.

Of the multitude of elephants which overran Ceylon even in the middle of this century, some idea may be formed from the fact referred to by Sir Samuel Baker of three first-rate shots having in three days bagged 104 elephants!

The really distressing part of such slaughter is the waste of so much good meat, as it never seems to occur to the hungriest Singhalese to eat elephant steak or stew. Of course all good Buddhists are by way of being vegetarians, but the rule on that point is so elastic, that it is reduced to refraining from killing or giving the order of death for any animal. If other people choose to incur the sin of taking life, the best Buddhist may without sin eat of the meat provided,[1] and any sort of venison (or any meat which,

[1] Buddhism is a nice school for casuists. The Buddhist, who would on no account kill cockroaches, turns in his chickens to eat them. Fishers will not kill fishes, but lay them on the shore to die; they say they are not to blame for the fishes' peculiarities of breathing. So with regard to serpents,

when smoked and dried, can be passed off as venison), is most acceptable, but not elephant. (Buddha himself is said to have eaten freely of the flesh of wild pig.)

In Africa, on the other hand, the death of an elephant means a feast for hungry tribes, and every morsel of the carcass is consumed. There however, such is the havoc by ivory hunters, that the country south of the Zambesi is already wellnigh cleared, and no wonder, when we consider that the twenty-five tons of ivory annually required by one English firm (Messrs Rodgers & Sons of Sheffield) involves the death of eight hundred tusk elephants! How rarely people investing in nice ivory-handled knives think of such antecedents!

Wonderful to relate, in all his prolonged warfare with the lords of the forest, Major Rogers only came to grief once; that was on the 29th December 1841, when exploring a new forest track near Hambantota. He had done a good deal of execution all the morning, and was following a herd of elephants, and had fired twice at one of them, when it turned, and in a moment caught him in its trunk, and flourished him about as if he had been an infant. It carried him towards a stream, but dropped him on the sloping ground, and again and again attempted to crush him with its great head, while emitting the most awful roars.

Happily the sloping ground frustrated its efforts, and each time Major Rogers slipped from under it, till both reached the bed of the stream. Then the elephant tried to lift him by his clothes, which happily were very old, and gave way in every direction, so that he was nearly stripped. Then the great creature played ball with him, kicking him

they will not kill them, but cradle them in baskets or spathes of palm-blossom and float them down the river, hoping that they may be drowned.

from its fore to its hind legs, and back again. Just then the elephant suddenly jerked up its head and got entangled in some jungle ropes (vines), which evidently alarmed it, awakening suspicions of a trap. Major Rogers lay perfectly still, feigning death, and when the elephant got disengaged from the vines, it moved off as if satisfied, avoiding treading on its victim, but flourishing his torn garments, and trumpeting hideously.

The result of this encounter was, that the left shoulder was dislocated, the left arm broken in two places and otherwise severely contused, two serious hurts on the right side, and a general all-overish consciousness of having been severely battered. He was fifty miles from home, with an intervening mountain 4000 feet high to be crossed. However, his men rallied round him, and carried him safely back to Badulla, where he continued his work as a most efficient assistant Government agent till the fatal day when, as he was crossing the Haputale Pass, a most appalling thunderstorm came on, and he took refuge in a rest-house, which then stood on the edge of the forest. (The forest is now the Sherwood estate, and the rest-house was accidentally burnt.)

There he found friends who were also detained by the heavy downpour of rain, and Major Rogers stepped on to the verandah to see if there were any symptom of the storm passing away. As he turned to re-enter the house, a blinding flash of lightning was followed by a deafening thunder-crash — the central pole of the triumphal arch (*pandal*) before the house was riven, the horses and coolies in the back verandah and out-houses were all struck down, not seriously injured however, but poor Rogers fell forward with his face to the door, dead. It was evident that the

electric fluid had been attracted by his brass military spurs, for one heel was discoloured.[1]

Instead of carrying him back to lay him at Badulla, where he had so long ruled wisely and well, his body was carried to Nuwara Eliya, there to be laid in the peaceful God's Acre, just 4000 feet nearer heaven than at Badulla, but there by a most strange coincidence his tomb was no sooner finished than it likewise was stricken by "fire from heaven"; and we can scarcely wonder that a people who (theoretically) hold all life sacred (though they had never hesitated to petition Major Rogers to be their benefactor by slaying as many as possible of the elephants which devastated their fields and gardens), believed that these fiery flashes were in very deed the ministers of heaven's righteous retribution on one who had dealt such destruction to the brute creation.

Yet so truly did they appreciate his justice and ability, and so greatly was he personally loved, that at the suggestion of a Kandyan Buddhist chief, these very people subscribed for and erected to his memory a pretty little Christian church in the town of Badulla: for they said, "We Buddhists build a Vihara to the memory of an eminent Buddhist, therefore it is fitting that Major Rogers, a Christian, should have his memory perpetuated by a church of his faith."

[1] In a country so subject to the awful majesty of tropical thunderstorms, these are responsible for many casualties. In June 1884 a thunderbolt fell right upon a drinking and gambling den, concealed in the heart of the jungle at Kanduboda. Of the ten men present one was killed, three were on the following day reported to be dying, and all the others more or less injured. A very ghastly case occurred in May 1891. Three men had gone out fishing in a canoe, when a storm set in, and the canoe was stricken by lightning. All three lost consciousness, and when at length one man revived, he found one of his companions dead, and the other unconscious and badly singed. With great difficulty he contrived to bring the canoe back to Colombo with its sad freight.

So Badulla owes her church to this, "the most active official, the most prominent planting pioneer, and the most famous sportsman, Ceylon ever saw." Of him Major Skinner wrote that, "At the time of his death, he was performing, to the entire satisfaction of the Government and the public, the offices of Government Agent for the district of Uva, District Judge, Commandant of the district, and Assistant in charge of the roads of the province—duties which, after his death, required four men to perform, with far less efficiency, promptitude, and punctuality than when they were administered by him alone."

Speaking of elephants, Major Skinner remarked that the largest wild elephants captured were invariably the most docile, but also most sensitive. He also noted that at kraals the Singhalese invariably selected the smallest elephants to decoy the big ones, who never showed any violence or ill-will to these little traitors. The finest he ever saw, fed from his hand the very evening he was captured, and proved most docile to his training till the first day he was put in harness to draw a waggon. This indignity was more than the great lord of the forest could endure. He dropped in the shafts, and died then and there of a broken heart. So said the natives, and so Major Skinner firmly believed, having seen the self-same thing occur in several other cases.

But those which are captured young are truly valuable allies, combining as they do such marked intelligence with mighty strength. For dragging heavy machinery or clearing new ground they are invaluable, *vide* Sir Samuel Baker's account of his elephants at work on his farm at Nuwara Eliya. He had brought out a "cultivator" large enough to anchor twenty of the small native bullocks; but a splendid elephant worked it as though it had been a toy, cutting

through the coarse roots of rank turf as a knife peels an apple.

Then a long wooden plough drawn by eight bullocks did its work, and finally, when the seed was sown, the original elephant reappeared on the scene, simultaneously dragging a pair of heavy harrows, attached to which and following behind were a pair of light harrows, and after these came a roller. Thus were time and labour economised.

When not required for farm work, this useful creature was employed in building a dam across a stream. The newly felled forest was distant only about 50 yards, and the rough stems of trees furnished suitable logs about 15 feet long and 18 inches in diameter. Under the direction of her driver, she lifted these one at a time *in her mouth*, after testing the point at which she secured an exact balance, and then, steadying it with her trunk, she carried each to the stream, and laid them in exactly parallel rows. The larger logs she rolled gently over with her head and foot, guiding each with her trunk till she had arranged it exactly to her own satisfaction and that of her driver.

Of course, however sagacious the creature may be, such practical usefulness as this is only attained by a long course of most patient training; but it is well worth the trouble of teaching an animal which lives about a hundred years. The average term of life is eighty years, but there have been authentic cases of elephants known to have worked in the Indian Commissariat stables for a hundred and fifty years.[1]

Most of the tame elephants in Ceylon are employed in

[1] The elephantine development is altogether leisurely. The female does not attain maturity for fifteen years, so as the mother carries her calf twenty-two months, she is probably about seventeen years old when the first calf is born. She has only one at a birth, and suckles it for two years. (She has

connection with felling jungle, dragging timber, and making roads. They are also valuable assistant masons, and I have often watched with the greatest interest the tame elephant's share in building stone bridges, and the wonderful sagacity and skill with which they contrive to place very heavy stones, and then with their heads shove them into exact position. When one sees an elephant's skull with its massive frontal, about 8 inches thick of bone and muscles, one can understand something of the secret of the enormous force he can exert. The well-protected brain of this sagacious beast is singularly small, only occupying about one-eighth of the skull, and it needs an expert marksman to hit it with fatal precision.

Gorgeous as is a procession of richly caparisoned elephants, it must be allowed that the fine feathers go a long way, for nothing can be more grotesquely ugly than the huge ungainly creature, with its grey leathery skin hanging loose in wrinkled folds as he stands ceaselessly fidgeting, swaying his great body from side to side, shaking his head, flapping his great ears to keep off the flies, swinging his legs and tail, or twisting his snake-like proboscis (sensitive as the antennæ of an insect). Therewith he lightly passes over a fruit-tree, seeking for ripe fruit, and having found one he gathers it with the tip of his trunk as neatly as a girl could lift a cherry with her lips, and then the great trunk curls up and carefully deposits the dainty in its hideous red mouth. It drinks in the same way.

only two teats, which are situated between the fore legs. The baby sucks with its mouth, not with the trunk.)

The male does not attain maturity till it is about twenty years of age, and when in captivity is not full grown till about twenty-five. In freedom it goes on growing till it is about thirty years old, and continues in its prime till it is about sixty.

You almost wonder that so large a creature can condescend to toy with small fruit, but then you should see him at work in real earnest at dinner-time. Indeed it can be no trifle to satisfy the appetite of a stableful of these huge herbivorous creatures, each of which daily consumes, if it can get it, about 80 lb. weight of green fodder and 18 lb. of grain. The females are expected to be satisfied with less, as are also the Government elephants, whose rations, I am told, are limited to about 50 lb. weight, so that the poor beasts can never know the satisfaction of repletion (like that hungry street Arab who was asked if he had ever known what it was to eat till he was satisfied, and whose face lighted up at the pleasant memory as he answered, "Yes, once!").

Even on this reduced scale, an elephant's "daily bread" costs about five shillings.[1] First, each gets a pile of enormous *chupatties*, or, as we should call them in Scotland, bannocks—coarse cakes about a foot in diameter; then a heap of green meat and grain of some sort, and if sugar-cane is available, a great bundle of sugar-cane, otherwise balls of native sugar and ghee (rancid butter), for they love all sweetmeats, and will take the smallest *bonbon* or fruit from one's hand, as gently as a child.

The patient politeness and obedience of a group of educated elephants is most remarkable, however hungry, never touching the most tempting food till permission has been given, or till their turn comes, when each uplifts its mighty trunk, while its attendant places a huge ball of rice in its

[1] I am told that the daily rations of each elephant in the Zoological Gardens in London consists of 10 lb. of sea-biscuit, 42 lb. of Swedish turnips, a truss and a half of hay, and a mash composed of 1 bushel of chaff, 1 bushel of bran, and 3 lb. of rice.

open mouth. Sometimes, at the bidding of the *mahout*, an elephant will abstain from swallowing any specially dainty morsel, hiding it in the corner of its mouth till afterwards, when it will give up the treasure and go shares!

The restlessness of the trunk is a very remarkable characteristic. I have often thought that some intelligent elephant must have instructed his fellows in the secret of perpetual motion, for it is incessant, and the concentrated essence of unrest lies in the trunk, which is never still for a moment.

If it is amusing to watch the great creatures feed, it is also interesting to watch their daily toilet as they stand in the water, while their keepers scrub them with natural scouring brushes—*i.e.*, half of the thick fibrous husk which enfolds the cocoa-nut. Occasionally a rough stone is substituted, and acts as sandpaper. Every elephant answers to its own name. "The Pearl," "The Rosebud," "The Ethereal Fairy," are among the playful titles to which these ponderous creatures obediently respond.

Strange as it may seem, like most other big creatures these grandly powerful animals are really very delicate, and require good care, their feet being very liable to sores, and their skin to abrasion. Their eyes, too, are subject to inflammation; and long journeys in the sun are distasteful to a creature that loves to stand in the cool shade waving branches in his trunk to keep off the flies, and fanning himself as assiduously as any Spanish beauty. When in good health an elephant can travel about forty miles in a day, at a slow, steady pace. But if over-driven and hurried, as has sometimes been done by too impetuous foreigners, the willing beast has been known to drop down dead.

Speaking of the tenderness of the elephantine foot, I may

mention a curious detail concerning a tame elephant at Bristol. Quite unaccountably it fell into bad health, and became lame. Mr Bartlett, Superintendent of the London Zoological Gardens, was requested to inspect it; and after minute examination of its feet, he remarked, "You have rats here." "Oh, yes," was the answer; "there are plenty of rats here!" the elephant-house being a very old building. "Well," said he, "they are eating the elephant; you can see the marks of their teeth on the soft part of the soles of the feet. When the elephant lies down to sleep the rats come and gnaw through the thick leathery pad till they reach the quick; and next morning when the poor beast goes out to walk on the gravelled paths little bits of sharp flint lodge in the bitten places, and so it becomes lame."

On Mr Bartlett's recommendation good rat-hunting terriers were thenceforward kept with the elephant until a new house could be built, and the big creature rapidly recovered.[1]

What becomes of elephants which die in the forest is an unsolved mystery, as it is exceedingly rare to find one which has died a natural death. The Singhalese say that in the deep forests to the east of Adam's Peak lies a mysterious valley, only to be reached by a narrow pass between deep rock walls, and that therein is a quiet lake,

[1] Concerning tame elephants as a profitable speculation, it is interesting to learn that those at the London "Zoo" earn about £800 a-year, besides conferring indescribable enjoyment to thousands, by giving rides at 2d. a-head. Many as are the riders packed on those long-suffering broad backs, it is startling to be told that on the Bank Holiday in 1890 no less than 24,000 twopences were taken, a number slightly in excess of the whole number of visitors, so that many extravagant visitors probably indulged in several such rides.

beside which all elephants desire to lie down and die in peace. So when sorely wounded, or very old, they seek to reach this happy valley, and there leave their bones. But no one now living has ever been able to find this bourne whence no elephant returns.

Sir Samuel Baker says that in the course of many years' hunting in Asia and Africa he has occasionally, but very rarely, seen a dead elephant. Most of those recorded bore the mark of a bullet. One found on the Agra *patenas* in Ceylon was a fine tusk elephant, which had evidently been killed in a furious duel with another tusker, his body being literally bored in many places by the enemy's tusks. The ground all round was trodden down with the heavy trampling of the great warriors. But Sir Samuel says he has never seen a wild elephant sick. When wounded they salve the sore with wet mud, or else by blowing dry dust over it, to protect the surface from flies, which would lay eggs and breed maggots.

There is a horrible fly in Ceylon which lays live maggots; these instantly commence burrowing into the flesh, and within twenty-four hours grow large, and make loathsome sores. The treatment for such is a teaspoonful of calomel rubbed in.

My brother's letters used to tell of the great herds which ranged through the eastern forests, and how he used to watch them at night coming to bathe in the great neglected tanks (like swampy lakes), and in the daytime browsing peacefully or sleeping, some fanning themselves with green branches—the young ones, so innocently playful, miniatures of their parents, but having a good deal of shaggy hair, which wears off by friction as they rub against one another, or force their way through the jungle.

When a young one is captured, perhaps six months old, it at first refuses food, but after a day or two it will drink a bucketful of buffalo's milk; presently it is promoted to rice, and then to bananas and succulent young grass.

It is satisfactory to know that since the imposition in 1870 of the ten-rupee tax on each elephant slain (in the form of a licence paid in advance), the herds, which were previously in danger of being exterminated as effectually as have been the buffaloes of the American prairies, have now recovered to such an extent that in the North Central Province, in the Batticaloa district of the Eastern Province, and in the least cultivated districts lying between Hambantota on the south-east coast, as far north as the Kumbukkan river, they are now probably as numerous as ever. In the months from January to March, which are the driest and healthiest for sportsmen, the elephants are so worried by the large buffalo flies which infest the dense forests along the base of the mountains that they betake themselves to the comparatively open country near the sea-coast of Uva.

It is pretty to see the way in which, on any alarm, the young ones are protected by their parents, being placed in the centre of the herd, while the mothers gather round so closely as effectually to hide them. The wonder is, that the little ones are not crushed and trampled under foot when the closely packed mass rush off in headlong fear, perhaps, as sometimes happens, down steep slippery ground, where they stumble and fall. Sometimes an old mother is seen hurrying along, her baby following with its little trunk twisted round the end of its mother's tail to enable it to keep up.

The Singhalese have a method peculiar to themselves of

capturing full-grown elephants by erecting a strong stockade in the jungle, so artfully contrived that wild elephants may enter it without perceiving that they are being trapped. A great army of beaters, numbering perhaps 4000 or 5000, are posted round a large tract of jungle where herds are known to be; many of the beaters are armed with guns, simply to frighten the animals; gradually they close in day after day for perhaps a fortnight, till at length the ever-retreating herd find themselves at the entrance of the kraal, and once inside, their capture is comparatively easy, and is effected by the treachery of tame elephants, who play the part of Delilah to perfection, coaxing and soothing the captives, and so covering the approach of men who contrive to creep up and slip strong rope-nooses round their legs, and then haul them to big trees, where they are held prisoner, while the tame ones help the captors to secure them, after which a short spell of hunger and unfailing gentleness commences the work of their education.

When the English first occupied Ceylon, the herds were so numerous that on grand field-days as many as 150 were sometimes captured in one kraal, and of these a considerable number used to be exported to India. For some years this trade almost perished in consequence of the imposition in 1873 (one account says 1870) of an export duty of £20 on each animal; it revived in a measure when in 1882 the royalty was reduced to £10, and Ceylon elephants were again in demand for European menageries and for the use of Rajahs in Southern India.

Mr Ferguson gives the following statistics of the number of elephants shipped during twenty years, furnished partly by the south-eastern forests, and partly by those of the extreme north of the Isle:—

	No. Exported.		No. Exported.
1863	173	1874	77
1864	194	1875	7
1865	271	1876	3
1866	203	1877	1
1867	148	1878	1
1868	167	1879	1
1869	199	1880	12
1870	38	1881	8
1871	74	1882	25
1872	53	1883	86
1873	83	1884	51

And so on down to 1890, when 42 were exported.

When captured young, an elephant can be trained, like an affectionate dog, to follow its master everywhere. One known as "Kurunegalla Jack," belonging to a medical officer, used to go round the hospital wards with his master, who taught him to be generally useful, and even to administer pills! A Malay soldier one day dropped his pill, whereupon "Jack" picked it up and dropped it into the man's open mouth, with a puff which blew the pill safely down!

"Jack" learnt to go out shooting with his master, combining the work of stalking-horse and retriever, for he would discern game afar, and wander towards it in the most casual manner, acting as cover for his master, and when the latter fired, he would scamper off quite delighted, and return with the jungle-fowl or peacock in his trunk.

Valuable as is the friendly elephant, there are certain individuals very much to be avoided, namely, the "rogues," which are solitary males, either mad with pain from some chronic suffering, too often the result of an old bullet wound, or else subject to an attack of periodical madness known as *must*, which is a form of temporary insanity to which the male elephant is occasionally subject, and which, during a period varying from five weeks to five months, makes him a very dangerous neighbour to man and beast.

A curious detail concerning Indian elephants is the fact that the natives recognise three distinct castes, differing in appearance as greatly as do our breeds of domestic cattle. The highest caste, or thorough-bred, are called Koomeriah: they are finely modelled animals, and march at a slow and stately pace. The clumsily built low-caste elephants are called Meerga: they are untidy looking, extra wrinkled animals, but comparatively lighter and swift. The intermediate caste are called Dwasala.

A very remarkable characteristic of these great creatures is that they are the best swimmers of any land animal. Of course this talent is more valuable in a land of broad rivers, such as India, than in Ceylon. Mr Sanderson, of Mysore, mentions that he once had occasion to send a troop of seventy-nine elephants from Dacca to Barrackpore near Calcutta, which involved crossing not only the main stream of the Ganges, but also several of its large tidal branches. For six hours his elephants swam without once touching ground; then, having rested awhile on a sand-bank, they again took to the water and swam for three hours more! Not one was lost. He states that this was by no means a unique swim.

It is said that elephants have an extraordinary aversion to dogs, and always retreat from them. It would be well indeed if leopards shared in this aversion! They unfortunately are only too partial to a feast of poor bow-wow, and are ever on the prowl, where such are kept, watching for an opportunity to devour them, snatching them from verandahs when peacefully asleep, or even from the side of their masters. They are unpleasantly stealthy foes, never rushing boldly to meet their prey, but creeping up stealthily or climbing a tree, so as to be able to drop suddenly upon it. They climb

as well as our household cat, and can even catch monkeys. They constantly sleep among the branches of trees.

A good deal of confusion has been caused by the habit, prevalent in Ceylon, of calling all these creatures chetahs, by which is generally understood the hunting leopard of India,[1] which is here unknown, and whose habits are altogether different. It captures its prey by fleetness of foot like a dog, whereas the leopard works by stealth like a true cat. Ceylon has two distinct varieties of leopard, of which the so-called chetah is much the smallest, rarely exceeding 7 feet from the tip of the tail to the nose: he is beautifully marked all over with small round black spots.

The panther, which is the other member of the leopard family found in the Isle, is marked with black rings having a tawny centre. His average length is 9 feet, and his weight nearly double that of the chetah. But naturalists and sportsmen differ greatly in their statements about these creatures, some maintaining that Ceylon has really only leopards, and that all the varieties are due to age and climate, those inhabiting the hot lowlands being generally short-haired, and, when old, of a very pale-yellow colour, while the mountain leopards have thick fur of a rich tawny colour, approaching brown.

Leopards rarely attack human beings except in self-defence. A remarkable exception to this rule occurred last year in the North Central Province, when a male and female chetah entered a house at dawn. The female "sat down in a corner," while the male attacked a sleeping man, sole inmate of the house. His son, who was asleep close by, ran to his father's assistance, and was severely mauled. On the villagers coming to the rescue the chetahs made off, and the

[1] *Felis jubata.*

victims were carried to the Vavuniya hospital, where both died of blood-poisoning.

An almost identical case occurred fifteen years ago in the same province, when two leopards entered a house, and the male killed one of the inmates.

They are not dainty feeders, and have been known to dig up a corpse and feast on it. Their habit of eating half-putrid dead beasts makes a wound from a leopard's claws very dangerous, as they are so liable to have been stuck into flesh, poisonous because decayed; therefore such wounds should be syringed with a very weak solution of carbolic acid in cold water, in the proportion of 1 to 35.

Leopards are grievously destructive to cattle, which stampede in terror at the smell of one, or even of ground on which one has lain. Certainly it would be no loss to the Isle if these could be exterminated!

Ceylon must, however, be congratulated on her immunity from tigers, which is remarkable, as they abound in the jungles of the nearest mainland in Southern India. But for the narrow Paumben Passage, which is only about half a mile in width, Ceylon would be a peninsula instead of an island. As it is, the tiger is so good a swimmer that half a mile would nowise trouble him. Happily, however, for Ceylon, the barren sand-spit, which so nearly connects the two lands, has no tempting shade nor any water to induce tigers to forsake their accustomed haunts and explore new ground.

Leopards have of late years become scarce about Nuwara Eliya; but abundant sport is to be obtained in the pursuit of the sambur deer (which is invariably miscalled elk, though it really bears no resemblance whatever to that somewhat ungainly creature, with the large palmated antlers),

and also of the small so-called "red-deer," which furnishes excellent venison.

The name of red-deer is as misleading as that of elk, as the animal in nowise resembles the red-deer of our Highlands. In the first place, though very numerous, they never go in herds; neither do they rush straight away from a foe, but run to and fro like a hare. They only measure about 25 inches to the shoulders, and their little antlers, rarely exceeding 8 inches in length, have only two points, and no brow antler. But the most marked peculiarity is that they have sharp tusks in the upper jaw, about an inch and a half in length, like those of a wild boar, except that they curve downwards, as weapons of defence instead of offence.

Another creature similarly furnished with sharp tusks is the tiny mouse-deer,[1] which only measures about 12 inches to the shoulder—a pretty graceful little creature, grey, with dark spots. It is commonly called the moose, also the musk-deer, probably because it has no sort of likeness to a moose (elk), neither is it provided with any musk-bag. It makes a very pretty pet, though apt to use its tusks rather sharply.

But the sambur is the joy of sportsmen. He is very much like a British red-deer, with the same character of antler, and rough, coarse, dark-brown hair. He is really much larger than the Scotch red-deer, but has inferior horns. He is a solitary animal, wonderfully sure-footed on the most dangerous rock-ledges, and runs clean away from his pursuer, if possible bolting straight up-hill, so he affords good sport to his foes, who hunt him with a pack of hounds, and kill him with the hunting-knife. The hounds are large

[1] *Moschus meminna.*

powerful animals, those preferred being a cross between blood-hound and fox-hound, having the heavy bay of the former, so as to make themselves heard when they have followed their quarry far into the jungle. Pure fox-hounds are found to be too keen in pursuit, and so they get lost and devoured in the beast-haunted forest, their chief danger being from the cat-like spring of the leopard. It is only in these cool mountain districts that hounds can live in any comfort, so, in the eyes of a sportsman, their presence here is another feature of the mountain paradise.

All day long the great sambur lies close in the deep forest, and all night he roams about feeding on the nicest young crops, and developing new tastes, as new products are introduced. One would suppose that quinine in any form was an acquired taste, but the foliage of young cinchona plantations proved specially enticing, and I believe that of cacao is still more so.

So the knowledge that the hunt is in the interest of the planters gives it extra zest—not that that can ever be lacking in a country so beautiful and so rugged, where there is no knowing into what difficulties the chase may not lead ere the day is done, up and down wellnigh inaccessible gorges, clothed with dense forest—such as also crowns the summit of steep grass-covered mountains—or marshy bits of the *patenas*—perhaps (to the bewilderment of the hounds) suddenly to end on the brink of some frightful precipice over which the monarch of the glen has leaped, in his despair, to the misty ravine far below, possibly to fall into some rushing cataract, whence his mangled remains may be rescued by a tribe of hungry villagers to whom such chances are a true stroke of good luck. For the flesh of the deer is the very ideal of luxury to these poor folk.

He who follows hart and hounds in these mountain districts has need to be in good training, for nowhere will he find grander or more difficult country than much of that between Nuwara Eliya and the low lands where the rugged grassy hills of Uva are seamed by mountain torrents dashing over huge boulders and masses of fallen rock, or overleaping perpendicular cliffs. One of these, the Fort M'Donald river, is a succession of falls and foaming cataracts, ending in a sheer fall of three hundred feet, over the mighty rock rampart which bounds the middle zone of these mountain terraces.

In its impetuous course this river, so justly dreaded by huntsmen, forms very dangerous pools enclosed in deep rock basins, whence the water in some cases disappears into subterranean caverns, thence reappearing in rushing rapids, till with a thunderous roar that echoes far through the mountains, it takes its last headlong leap and is lost to sight in a veil of dazzling spray, far, far below.

Throughout its course the river is exceedingly difficult of access, and as the hunted sambur (invariably called elk in Ceylon) generally tries to make for the water, a day's hunting in this neighbourhood is liable to try the strongest nerves and all capacities. In the annals of real sport I know no chapter more thrilling than Sir Samuel Baker's account of following a majestic stag up and down this frightful ravine, till in his last despair the magnificent creature bounded right over an awful precipice into the abyss far below, whence, with infinite toil, his splendid antlers were rescued. When the villagers heard of this, they toiled to the spot to secure the venison, but found that two fine leopards had been beforehand with them. However, they retrieved enough to reward them for their toil.[1]

[1] Eight Years in Ceylon, chapter vii. Longmans, Green, & Co.

Besides these large animals, the mountains shelter hares and herds of wild pigs; while of creatures which cannot be classed as game, there are wanderoo monkeys, black and grey squirrels, porcupines, rats, jackals, otters, mongooses, and civet cats.

One very attractive deer abounds on the plains, but is such a lover of heat that it never roams higher than 3000 feet above the sea-level. This is the axis or spotted deer, the only gregarious deer in Ceylon. It is a very pretty creature, in size and colour like our own fallow deer, but having slender horns, not palmated. The female has none. They are of a rich fawn colour, very dark on the back, and spotted with white, and they roam about in herds of from twenty to a hundred in the open park country, between the hills and the sea.

For the home-sick Briton, one special charm of these grassy downs is the melodious song of many skylarks, soaring and singing in the bright sunlight of this far land, as joyously as when rising from the fields and downs of the old country.

CHAPTER IX.

KANDY.

Tombs of the queens — Court dress — Titles — Kandyan ladies — A chief's jungle feast — Pandals — Masks — Musical instruments—Leeches—How to avoid them — Peradeniya Botanical Gardens—India - rubber trees — Palms — Talipot palm — Bamboo — Other gardens—Flying foxes—Various nests.

After a happy peaceful week at the Bishop's little bungalow at Pallagolla, during which we saw many friends, all on their way down from Nuwara Eliya to lower levels, we also followed, halting at Rambodda (between the red and white waterfalls), where there was quite a gathering of the planting community to attend a christening in the neat little church. Thence by coach to Gampola, whence the railway carried us through lovely country and across the wide Maha-velli-ganga, the "Great Sandy River," to Kandy, a beautifully situated little town clustering round an artificial tank, and surrounded on every side by beautiful hills. Here the vegetation of the hills meets that of the plains, and all the lovely varieties of foliage peculiar to each mingle in rank luxuriance.

It was the home of the latest Singhalese kings, and the last place to fall into the hands of foreigners. Now it is one

of the three seats of the English Government. Being only 1680 feet above the sea, with a warm moist climate, it forms a half-way house between Colombo, on the sea-level, and Nuwara Eliya, which has an elevation of 6240 feet. Comfortable bungalows, each in a pleasant shady garden, surround the lake, and are dotted all over the green hills overlooking the valley.

Of course people who live on the level of the lake are practically at the bottom of a deep cup, and are apt to find the steamy heat oppressive; but the homes on the upper roads not only enjoy fresher air, but far more extensive views, for beyond the red-tiled monasteries, temples, and churches, which are reflected in the blue mirror far below, rise the steep slopes of the verdant valley, where luxuriant foliage blends with vividly green expanses of lemon and guinea grass, and far beyond the green goblet stretch beautiful mountain-ranges—the lovely Matale Hills and Hunasgeriya Peak; the latter, which is nearly 5000 feet in height, often towering above clouds.

Such a view as this, generally seen through a fairy-like frame of feathery bamboos and palms, is a perpetual joy, whether in the clear early morning, under the bright blue sky of noonday, or when bathed in the soft golden light of evening. I thought the finest point of view of any was that selected many years ago by a friend of my childhood, Simon Keir, who was one of the earliest European settlers here.

Kandy is indebted for its lake to Sri Wikrema Raja Singha, the last of the Kandyan kings, who, for the embellishment of his capital, flooded the paddy-fields in this, as also in a lower valley. The latter has been restored to its original use, but the lake at Kandy happily remains as a thing of beauty round which the inhabitants take their daily

KANDY, LOOKING TO THE MATELE HILLS.

Shows the Temple of the Tooth, Buddhist Library, Government House, &c.

three-mile drive with most monotonous regularity. It is surrounded by a very ornamental low stone wall, with niches to contain small lamps for illumination on certain festivals, especially at a feast of lanterns in November.

A small island in the lake was reserved for the special enjoyment of the ladies of the royal zenana. When the British took possession, this was utilised as a powder-magazine, but now is restored to more than its primitive beauty, being a miniature paradise of flowering shrubs.

Though this lakelet is the making of Kandy, its creation in the beginning of the present century is said to have been an occasion of grievous hardship to the people, having been entirely made by compulsory labour—the Raja-karia, which was always enforced by the native kings, and by means of which the gigantic tanks for irrigation and other great works were produced. In this case, however, the bloodthirsty cruelty of the king made work done for him peculiarly oppressive, and rich and poor, priests and soldiers, are said to have all rejoiced when in 1815 their hateful tyrant was deposed by British arms.

He was captured in a mountain-cave, and was deported to the Fort of Vellore, near Madras, where, solaced by the company of his four queens, he was retained until his death, seventeen years later. He was the last of a series of a hundred and sixty-five kings, whose reigns extended over a period of 2358 years.

Judging from an official report made by Major Johnston in 1804, the condition of the people cannot have been luxurious. Even rice, which, although the mainstay of Eastern races, we deem such very simple fare, was then throughout Ceylon, but especially in the Kandyan province, reserved for the higher classes, and, he says, "is a luxury of which

the lowest order of the people seldom partake, their chief food being a sort of grain that grows on the hills, with little cultivation, and without watering. This, together with a root dug from the bottom of the tanks, and a decoction of the bark of a tree found in abundance in the forests, constitute their principal means of support."

In those days, whatever was deemed a luxury was reserved for the king and the priests. It is said that even windows, tiled roofs, and white walls were prohibited for the use of subjects; so that, with the exception of the king's palace and the Buddhist temples and monasteries, the old town of Kandy consisted chiefly of thatched mud hovels. Even in 1844, Hoffmeister speaks of "the filthy streets of this poverty-stricken city." It now numbers about 20,000 inhabitants, of whom about 250 are British; and their comfortable homes and the spires and towers of Christian churches of various denominations are pleasant features in the scene.

But the really characteristic buildings are the Buddhist monasteries and colleges; an octagonal building, in which are stored treasures of oriental literature; the palace of the old kings, now the residence of the Government agent; and the ancient Hall of Audience, which is now used as the District Court of Kandy, and which is a very striking hall supported by many richly carved wooden pillars. Close to this hall is the Maligawa, the far-famed Temple of the Dalada or Tooth, which, though a mere piece of ivory half the size of my first finger, is supposed to have been a veritable tooth of Gautama Buddha, and is reverenced accordingly by all the millions who profess to be his followers.

Naturally, in this stronghold of Buddhism, the chief characteristic of the human element is the large proportion of

the brethren of the yellow robe of all ages and sizes—from reverend old men down to quite small boys—all alike with shaven head, and drapery in flowing lines like a Roman toga. At Kandy almost all are members of the Siamese sect which wears the robe with one end thrown over the left shoulder, but the right shoulder and arm always bare—thus producing a fine harmony in brown and yellow. A yellow palm-leaf fan completes the picture, and is carried in order that the holy brother may veil his eyes as he passes anything so distracting or so evil as a woman. I cannot say that I have ever observed the fan used for this purpose!

It is whispered that some of these priests have taken the yellow robe as the simplest method of getting a divorce from an unloved wife. They are at liberty at any moment to throw off their robes and return to the position of ordinary mortals—beginning life anew with a new wife. But while they wear the robe they are bound to be very strict; and I must plead guilty to having occasionally, for malicious fun, cordially shaken hands with friendly brethren, wondering what terrible penance they would feel bound to perform in consequence!

At Kandy I was most hospitably received and lionised by Mr and Mrs Philip Templer, and with their kind aid and that of other friends who sympathised in my wish to see everything of interest, I think there were few, even of the most out-of-the-way corners, left unvisited or unsketched.

Amongst those somewhat off the beaten track are the tombs of the Kandyan queens—not beautiful in themselves, and somewhat ruinous, but, as is invariably the case in Ceylon, glorified by the surrounding foliage. The red-tiled double roof, shaded by luxuriant palms loaded with nuts and blossom, each crown a study in green and gold and

brown; gnarled old temple-trees filling the air with fragrance; and yellow-robed priests laying offerings of yellow flowers before small dome-shaped relic-shrines, beneath huge Bo-trees with spiritual-looking white stems and light foliage, which, like that of our own aspen, quivers ceaselessly even when there is scarcely a perceptible breath of air.

As regards the Kandyan kings, their funeral rites were invested with a strange veil of mystery and awe. As "children of the Sun" the royal race were entitled to supreme reverence from a people who worshipped the heavenly host. In order to deepen this veneration, many ceremonies were observed. The funeral pyre was so great, and was so constantly renewed, that it burnt for ten days, when it was extinguished, and the ashes of the pyre were collected in an earthen urn.

A masked figure in dark robes then appeared, and, taking the urn, mounted an elephant, and, heading a solemn funereal procession, led the way to the Maha-velli-ganga. On reaching the brink of the river, he descended from his high seat, and carrying in one hand the urn, in the other a drawn sword, he silently took his place in a dark canoe, which was covered with cocoa-nut blossoms and green leaves. The canoe was then towed to the middle of the stream, when the dark figure rose, and, holding up the urn in presence of the multitude, cut it in two by one blow of his sword, thus consigning to the sacred waters the precious dust of the royal race of the Sun. Then diving beneath the surface, the dark-robed mask disappeared; and the frail canoe drifted down the stream, with its cargo of flowers.

The men who had collected the ashes were conveyed to the other side of the river, and certain death was supposed to await them should they ever return. The elephant that

had borne the sacred urn was thenceforth himself sacred. He, too, was sent to the opposite shore, there to end his days in idleness. Thus was the royal dust disposed of; and straightway a new child of the Sun was ready to shine on the darkness of his people, for just so long as his next of kin were content to await their little hour,—the rapidity of succession in these Singhalese annals being strikingly suggestive of oriental impatience in that respect.

We made expeditions to various Buddhist temples, which are invariably nestled into some very picturesque corner, and the drive or ride to them was always through lovely scenery. In one of these—a white temple beside a dark rock, and which has the peculiarity of being three storeys high—we were interested by the wall frescoes, all in the crudest primitive colours, depicting scenes in Buddhist mythology, and the penalties of divers sins. Bright blue devils with red-hot tongs are shown pulling out the teeth of one wretched victim, while the reward of cruelty is exemplified by a hunter being torn into fragments by blue dogs.

In a side chapel lay a reclining image of Buddha 57 feet long, and in the inner shrine worshippers were laying graceful offerings of rosy lotus-blossoms and pale yellow roses. In the upper storey treasures of gold and silver work, small figures of Buddha, and Bo-trees finely wrought in metal, are stored within a fine bronze dagoba, and all were courteously exhibited by their yellow-robed guardians.

To me all the rock temples have a special attraction: they are always picturesquely niched, and involve something of a scramble. We drove from Kandy to see one at Hindo Galla—ascending by steep rock steps to a red-tiled, white-pillared temple, nestling beneath a huge boulder of chocolate-coloured rock with yellow and grey on the under

side, and a group of yellow-robed monks supplying a perfect touch of colour, with surroundings of dark rocks, kitool palms, and a temple-tree loaded with fragrant blossom. Also a fine large bo-tree, surrounded by several terraces of masonry all lined with triangular niches for lamps, and glowing with yellow marigolds—sacred on account of their colour.

All through this month of May, I find in my journal perpetually recurring entries of rain, rain, rain—including some magnificent thunderstorms. However, no one seemed to mind the weather, except the luckless natives who are not provided with waterproofs, and who here, as in India, are exceedingly sensitive to the smallest fall of temperature—especially dreading the delicious coolness of early dawn.

On two days there were races at Peradeniya, which were attended by every one, notwithstanding the rain. Happily the intervening day was glorious. I might say, of course it was, as it was the day chosen for the Queen's birthday levee, and a very pretty and curious sight it was. It was held in the audience-hall of the old palace of the Kandyan kings, a low dark hall supported by a double row of handsome wooden pillars. Their capitals are richly carved, and both on these and on the walls are shown flights of the geese sacred to Buddha.

The distinctive feature of the scene was, as it ever must be, the very handsome and very extraordinary court-dress of the Kandyan chiefs; and I may remark once for all, that, as compared with a grand Indian durbar, this is the one only phase of gorgeousness quite peculiar to Ceylon, and in which no invidious comparison is possible. To give an idea of the dress by mere description is almost impossible.

In the first place, though the Kandyan chiefs are naturally

a fine handsome set of men, their object seems to be to make themselves appear very much bigger; therefore, to begin with, instead of wearing a single piece of cloth as a *comboy* or long kilt, they wear seven pieces of very fine silk or muslin, probably embroidered in gold, and heavily fringed, each nine yards in length. These sixty-three yards are wound round and round the waist, caught up so as to form a divided skirt over tight white trousers, which end in a neat frill above the bare brown feet. I was assured that some of the very great swells literally contrive to wind on 150 yards! The folding is so contrived that the figure gradually tapers from the ankle up to the waist, round which (of course, many inches wider than the real waist) is fastened a broad gold-embroidered velvet belt. The shape of the man thus adorned is that of a peg-top!

Over a shirt or vest fastened with splendid studs is worn a short jacket with very large gigot sleeves to above the elbow. These jackets are of the brightest coloured brocaded silks or velvet, all gold-embroidered, as are also the very peculiar and gorgeous velvet hats, of which you never see two alike, though in shape all are like very large rather flat pincushions, and surmounted with an eccentric ornament like a miniature Christmas-tree of gold and jewels. The gold embroidery makes these head-dresses exceedingly heavy. The long black hair is parted on the forehead like a woman's, and is fastened at the back in the usual *kondé* or knot. An enormous ring, worn on the third or fourth finger, completes a costume whose gaudiness is effectually harmonised by the rich brown colour of the dark-eyed chief, and a group of fifty or sixty of these very fine birds in their very fine feathers is a sight well worth seeing. Some wear a full-plaited muslin tippet over the jacket.

Only think how inconvenient this wonderful official dress must have been in the reign of the Kandyan kings, in whose presence the highest chiefs were bound to crouch in lowly humility, and if obliged to pass in front of him, even at a considerable distance, they were compelled to stoop so low as apparently to be creeping! Happily under British rule all men may walk upright, and the common-wear costume of these gorgeous Ratemahatmayas is the semi-European dress adopted in the colleges,—the *comboy* or waist-cloth, the *kondé* or knot of long back-hair, and the tortoise-shell comb being the only distinctive features, all other articles of dress being British.

The court dress of the minor head-men is marked by a simplicity by no means unbecoming. Their only distinctive feature is the saucer-shaped hat, but theirs is of plain white material. Their only other garment is the simple long loin-cloth, and a cloth or belt wrapped round the waist. Thence upwards they are clad in nature's own suit of silky brown.

Besides these there was a great display of distinctive dresses, the variety of turbans and other head-dresses alone forming quite a study. Prominent in the crowd are the Mudaliyars, Singhalese officials in their quaint, half native, half Dutch dress. Their jet-black hair is rolled up at the back in the usual *kondé*, into which is stuck the very high tortoise-shell comb, while the usual semicircular comb is worn round the back of the head, with the ends above each ear. Instead of trousers they retain the long *comboy* worn to the feet, but these are encased in white stockings and patent-leather shoes; the upper man is clothed in a long Dutch-looking official coat of dark-blue cloth with large gold buttons, a white waistcoat displaying gorgeous buttons and large gold chain, and high shirt-collar and silk neck-tie; and a

gold belt, with a small curved sword, complete this hybrid but eminently respectable costume. The little sword is often studded with gold and gems.

The Mudaliyars are officials of the low country, and are of three ranks; the lowest are chief revenue officers of large districts. About twenty are called Mudaliyars of the Governor's Gate, and are described as equivalent in standing to our "captain and aide-de-camp." The Maha (or Great) Mudaliyar is the Governor's chief interpreter. Below all these rank the Muhandirams and Arachchis.

Many of these gentlemen are burdened with such stupendous names as may well make them envy simple Tom Brown or John Smith. Here is one name, "Solomon Dia-Abayawikrama Jayatilaka Senawiratna Raja Kumararesan Kadakorala Bandaranayaka." Another is, "Peter Abraham Dias Abayawikrama Jayatilaka Bandaranavaka." And yet another, "Mahawasala Kurana Liyana Mudianslage Don Abraham Karunatilika Abavaratna." These are taken almost at random from the official list.[1]

Other titles of the low country are: Ralahami, Mahatmaya,

[1] I recently received an account of the funeral in Jan. 1888 of Mr Rajapakse, a greatly respected Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate. The funeral procession, which was upwards of a mile in length, was preceded by the pipers of the 1st Battalion of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders playing coronachs. Then followed eighty-three Buddhist priests of both the Amarapura and the Siam sects, led by three high priests. The hearse, which was drawn by four black horses, was followed by upwards of two hundred carriages (native and European); then came nearly three hundred servants and dependants from the principal estates of the deceased, and seven hundred mourners from other districts, also a file of fifty of the Lascorien Guard, in full official dress, and a band of piping musicians in strange ancient costume. To the music of the latter were added the efforts of forty-five tomtom-beaters who played the Dead March, in real oriental fashion.

At the grave the Buddhist priests chanted stanzas, a high priest delivered a funeral oration, and jasmine flowers were thrown into the grave.

Nilame, and Appuhami, which respectively describe a headman, a gentleman, a high-officer, or a man of middle-class. A Disawa governs a province, subject, of course, to the British Government agent, while the gorgeous Kandyan officials, whose court dress I have just described, are Ratemahatmayas. The chief of a district is an Adigar. A village chief is a Gamarala, the chief officer of a village is the Arachchila, and his subordinate is a Vidana. These are but a few out of many.

The ladies are distinguished by titles as varied as those of their lords. The wife of a chief is Kumarihami, other ladies of high birth are Walawwe-mahatmayo, of which title, Mahatmayo simply means madam, and is applicable to any lady. The wife of a minor chief is Menike, and Etani and Lamahami mark the feminine of other grades.

I was present one evening at a grand reception of Kandyan ladies at the Pavilion (as the Government House at Kandy is called—a pleasant house, two storeys high, with broad cool verandahs and delicious gardens, with shrubberies extending far up the hill). The ladies, who do not aim at increasing their apparent bulk, looked strangely diminutive in proportion to their magnificent lords. Their plain modest dress consisted of the simple comboy—*i.e.*, skirt of fine white muslin, with a gold stripe running through it, and neat little gold-spangled jacket; their long black hair caught in a loose knot behind, and fastened with gold pins—never any covering on the head; and though their fine old family jewels will repay close inspection, the mode of cutting and setting is such, that they have none of the brilliancy which we prize in gems.

Whatever other title she may own, a Singhalese lady is generally described as Menikê, *i.e.*, "the Jewel"—a pleasant

suggestion of honour, well carried out by the fact that the enforced seclusion of zenana life is unknown in Ceylon, where women enjoy freedom as absolute as that of their Western sisters.

Most of the chiefs who attended the reception could talk more or less English, but the ladies were as deficient therein as we were in Kandyan, so the evening was decidedly stiff.

Speaking of official titles, I must not omit those connected with the Buddhist temples. The principal lay officer in charge of the Temple of the Tooth is the Diyawadana (or Dewa) Nilame, and the lay incumbent of the temple is the Basnayaka Nilame. All these official titles were formerly conferred annually, but I believe that now each is bestowed for life. The chief high priest is styled Maha Nayaka Annanse, and the second chief high priest is Anunayaka. Priests and deacons are Terunnanse and Ganinnanse. A Kapuwa is the officiating priest in what is called a Devil Temple, which is a form of Hindooism even more debased than the original; a Yaka-dura is a devil-dancer, and a Wedarale is a native doctor, whose science of healing is generally much on a level with that of the aforesaid devil-dancers.

I fear this page will prove as dull reading as a chapter of genealogy, but to any one travelling in the Isle it is interesting to understand the titles which so often meet the ear.

The Queen's Birthday was also celebrated by a pretty ball at the Pavilion, followed by a club ball, at both of which the planting community mustered strong, with that hearty enjoyment of a good dance, and of life in general, which is so very characteristic of society in Ceylon.

Of various pleasant dinner-parties, the most interesting

was one to the Government agents of the Central, Northern, North-Western, Western, Southern, and Eastern Provinces. I believe that in the days of native rule, seven kings reigned over seven little kingdoms, but under English rule Ceylon was divided into six Provinces until 1873, when a seventh was created, namely, the North-Central, of which Mr Dickson[1] was appointed first Government agent. A few years later the great neglected district of Uva, in the south-east of the Isle, was created a separate Province; and finally, in January 1889, the district of Sabaragamua, lying between the Central and Southern Province, was also created a Province, thus making a total of nine.

Specially interesting to me was a grand breakfast in the real old Kandyan style, given in honour of the Governor by the Dewa Nilame and another gorgeously apparelled native official. The occasion was that of inspecting the land near the river, in view of proposed measures for irrigation. It was a beautiful drive through lovely scenery, and as we approached the scene of action, the road was thronged with gaily dressed natives, and fifteen elephants with grotesque housings. There is a much larger muster of elephants at some of the Temple festivities, but even fifteen suffice to stir up a good deal of dust in a hot day!

If India excels in "barbaric pomp," there is one detail in which Ceylon has the field quite to herself—namely, in the erection of pandals, which are a peculiarly graceful style of triumphal arch. In no other country have I seen anything like these structures, which are generally very light, and always in good taste.

This was my first introduction to these arches of welcome, so they had the additional fascination of novelty. Their

[1] Now Sir John F. Dickson.

construction is generally very simple, but always effective and very varied, and the rapidity with which they are run up, to do honour to any guest of mark, is surprising, as is also the lavish destruction of fruit-bearing palms and palm-blossoms, which are used for the perpetually recurring decorations—often on a very extensive scale. Indeed it is whispered that their creation is by no means an unmixed joy to those most closely concerned—namely, the villagers, whose head-men require them to find the bamboos, arecas, and other materials, to say nothing of days and days of unpaid work,[1] all for the honour and glory of welcoming a stranger.

In the first instance the skeleton framework, though sometimes composed of tall bamboos, is often made of the perfectly upright stems of the areca palm. These are frequently thickly entwined with long trails of the exquisitely graceful and delicate climbing ferns, or with a very rich species of stag's-horn moss, which grows luxuriantly in many places. (Its native name is *badal-wanassa*, which I believe means "The Goldsmith's Curse," so called because a luckless jeweller is said to have been driven mad in the effort to reproduce it in gold at the bidding of the king.) To this groundwork are perhaps affixed the white young leaves of the cocoa palm or leaves of the so-called sago palm, or graceful fronds of the Kitool or jaggery palm, which are so like gigantic leaves of maiden-hair fern. Several kinds of fern are freely used, varying of course with the district. Sometimes a light trellis-work is all covered with lovely mosses such as we cherish in hothouses and stoves, relieved here and there with bright blossoms, or with the white leaves and blossoms of the candle-nut.

[1] Where land is held on the condition of performing all such services when required.

On some of the most effective pandals, only three or four varieties of foliage are employed, in others almost every type of fruit and flower is represented; pine-apples and screw-pines, green and gold oranges, clusters of the large rich golden-brown nuts of the palmyra palm, clusters of the small areca-nut, or of cocoa-nuts of all ages from ivory-like infants to full-grown green or yellow nuts, long trailing bunches of the grape-like berries of the Kitool, large yellow shaddocks—in short, whatever fruit is available, but always so put together as to produce an effect of fairy-like lightness, with the almost invariable finishing touch of several plumes of cocoa or arcea palm blossom, which is quite unique in its pure beauty.

Of course, in British lands, even these materials might be so massed as to look heavy, but a Singhalese pandal is always elegant. Latterly, however, the occasional use of bunting, numerous small flags, and strips of scarlet and white calico marks a departure from the primitive artistic simplicity. I must not omit to mention the spires and pinnacles of deftly woven palm-leaves, nor the singularly light effect produced by a fringe of large yellow banana-leaves torn into ribbons, which is sometimes suspended all along either side of the road where the honoured guest is to pass.

There was a full attendance of the Kandyan chiefs in court dress, each carried in the old style in a hot stuffy palanquin. These were preceded by a company of musicians and devil-dancers in most fantastic attire, each wearing a large breastplate, and a sort of harness of shells and beads. Also a very curious silver head-dress like a crown, combined with a tall hat with a peak whence flows a long streamer. Others wore extraordinary and most hideously grotesque masks. One of the strangest, with horrid teeth and large tusks, had a cobra with distended hood over the forehead, and

one above each glaring eye; while on either side, two dancing figures projected like ears.

There is a considerable variety of these monstrosities, all of which are strictly reproduced from very ancient patterns. They are made of plaster gaudily coloured, and are manufactured at Bentota, half-way between Colombo and Galle. These alarming ugly masks are worn by the professional exorcists, who are called in, in cases of grievous illness, to scare the malignant devils to whose influence all suffering is attributed. They continue their noisy incantations the livelong night beside the miserable patients: no wonder that these so often die of the would-be remedy. Less repulsive masks are borne by the actors in village comedies, which, of course, are intended to be funny.

As to the musicians, I fear that oriental music can never be other than torture to Western ears, and the musical instruments of Ceylon consist of shrill ivory horns, drums, and "tom-toms," which are a sort of tambourine made of well-cured sheepskin tightly stretched over a wooden frame. This is struck with the fingers, and men, women, and children seem never to weary of it, as the accompaniment to interminable songs. In all the temples huge chank shells are blown as trumpets, and produce ear-splitting blasts, with which the priests delight to murder the sleep of their neighbours all through the night. Happily, when Europeans live near a temple, a hint from the local authorities places some limit on the hours of these dreadful "services of praise."

Only think how terrible must have been the effect when, as recorded in old Pali chronicles, the military band of the Singhalese King Dutuagaimunu was composed of sixty-four kinds of drums, which produced a roar as of thunder, while the shrieks of numberless great chanks rent the heavens.

Assuredly if, as we are credibly informed, a whole English army ran away at the blast of a hundred Scotch pipers, the foes of the Singhalese army might well fly at the blast of even a score of temple chanks! That was 300 B.C., and happily most of those drums have ceased to exist. We voted the survivors quite bad enough, as the dancers and musicians danced and played for our benefit till all our heads ached! One of the dances was very funny. A man on stilts represented a giant towering above all his fellows. This was to illustrate the dignity of royalty or its representative as compared with ordinary mortals.

On reaching our destination we found a most imposing group of temporary bungalows of bamboo and palm leaves run up for the day, a large central bungalow in which was spread an excellent breakfast, and a series of beautiful dressing-rooms for all the different sets of guests, those for the most honoured guests being hung with white calico, with delicate ferns pinned on in graceful tracery. White, being the royal colour, denotes special respect — a royal gift is wrapped in white and carried on the head; white cloths are spread over the seats prepared for great folk, and in ancient days over their pathway also. The rooms for lesser folk were hung with strips of bright calico or other material. Among the hangings of the breakfast hall was a large Cumming tartan shawl, which of course was said to be specially in my honour! From the fact of its being so very bright (emerald green and scarlet, with black and white stripes), this, my clan tartan, finds special favour with oriental races, so that I have frequently seen it in most unexpected and remote places, — occasionally worn as a turban.

Happily this day the weather proved perfect, which was

more than we could always say, for England itself could scarcely have given us a more uncertain climate than our experience of Kandy in May. However, we walked or drove in every direction, sketching temples and foliage, river, lake, and distant mountains, and returning with our dresses so embroidered with the sharp spikes of Spanish grass that it was a good half-hour's work every evening to pick them out. Moreover, there were few days when, if we ventured to leave the beaten tracks, we did not bring home some land-leeches! They are little brown creatures, about half or a quarter of an inch in length; but they can stretch themselves till they are a couple of inches long and thin as a thread. They literally swarm in the moist grass and foliage. I suppose that in a general way they contrive to exist on water (on the principle "*Quand on n'a pas ce que l'on aime, il faut aimer ce que l'on a!*); but certainly they lose no chance of securing a good drink at the expense of any animal, human or otherwise, which they can possibly attack.

Strange to say, they totally disappear in dry weather, and what becomes of them no one knows; but no sooner does rain fall, even a single heavy shower, than they are again swarming, and you see them sitting up on end (the thickest end), with the thread-like point, which is the head, furnished with five pairs of eyes, waving in every direction watching for their prey. (I have already referred to these pests, but verbal repetition may help to suggest their too frequent presence in real life!)

Should you incautiously venture to sit down on the cool inviting grass in pleasant green shade, it is as though you issued a general invitation to the thirsting legions, for straightway you see them approach from every side, advancing by a succession of jerks. They fix their head on

the ground, the body forming an arch, then bring up the tail, and again dart the head forward; and while you are flicking them off in one direction others are stealthily approaching, and making their way through the meshes of your stockings, whence they travel all over you, and feast unnoticed till your attention is attracted by little streams of blood. Probably you never discover them till you get home again, and then woe betide you if you pull them off: in that case the bite is very likely to fester, especially in the case of any one who is out of health, whereas if you let them drink their little fill they will fall off, and the application of a drop of sweet oil secures a speedy and clean healing. But if you object to being treated as the leeches' wine-vat, and have a little salt, lime-juice, or brandy at hand, a touch of either of these will cause them to relax their hold. Indeed a preliminary application of lime-juice generally wards off their attack.

On some of our marches through the dense jungle, where the narrow footpath only allowed us to travel single-file, or when after rain we crossed plains clothed with rank grass, it seemed as though the advance of the riders sounded a call to the approaching feast, so that the horsekeepers following on foot were severely attacked, their bare legs sometimes streaming with blood at the end of a march. The horses also suffered considerably.

But to horses, cattle, dogs, and other animals, a much more serious foe is the cattle-leech, which abounds in the rank vegetation around the neglected tanks and other stagnant pools, and which attaches itself to the muzzle or nostrils of creatures coming to drink, often passing thence into the throat, and causing great suffering and sometimes death.

The familiar leech formerly so largely used in medicine (well do I remember the large glass jar in which our old nurse used to keep about a dozen of these ugly creatures, and how on one occasion they escaped, and kept us in a state of terror for several days, till the housemaids retrieved the full tale of corpses in the course of carpet-sweeping!)—these useful allies of the two-legged leech are found in the swampy rice-fields, but are about twice the size of their European cousins, and are thirsty in proportion.

I had gained some experience of leeches when camping in the Himalayas, where the water-leeches proved peculiarly trying to dogs, and where the small land-leeches infest the lower spurs of that great mountain-range. Europeans try to defend themselves against these vexatious little foes by wearing leech-gaiters; but as the wily creatures generally contrive to wriggle their way inside, we concluded that these really tended to their feasting in peace, so we generally preferred to dispense with them.

The land-leeches in Ceylon are very local. Thus, while they swarm all about Kandy and Matelé, at Nalande, which is only distant about fifteen miles, we saw none, and were assured that the place was free from them.

In case of alarming timid travellers, I ought to state that people who are content to stick to beaten tracks may leave the Isle without even seeing one of these pests; but I speak from an artist's experience, ever on the look-out for the best possible point of view, even if to reach it involved climbing through stiff jungle or tall grass (which is fairly safe if you always rattle a stick in front of your feet, to give lurking serpents time to get out of your way, as they are delighted to do when possible).

In Ceylon, however, I found that many of the loveliest

sketching-grounds were absolutely untenable to a defenceless artist; so necessity, as usual, proved the mother of invention. I always carried a large waterproof rug, and had also a large waterproof sack, which secured my bedding from rain or dust, as the case might be. So, whenever the desirable sketching-ground was likely to prove very leechy, I commenced operations by spreading the waterproof rug on the ground, with the sack in the very middle, and my paint-box and sketching-block in position. Then, divesting myself of muddy boots, I stepped into the sack, which I then tied securely under my arms, and thus prepared, set to work, at the same time keeping a watchful eye on the rug, so as to flick off all adventurous assailants—and many they always were.

By this means I was enabled to secure many sketches which would otherwise have been quite impossible, especially one in the beautiful botanical gardens at Peradeniya, four miles from Kandy, of a glade where the exquisite Thunbergia, starred with myriads of blue-grey blossoms, climbs from a carpet of the freshest richest grass to the very summit of a large group of trees, thence drooping in graceful festoons, and linking them all together into one fairy-like sanctuary, haunted by dainty birds and radiant butterflies. I always remember the sunlight falling through that exquisite veil of delicate green and lavender as an ideal of tropical perfection. Like many other flowers which now grow so luxuriantly in Ceylon, the Thunbergia is not indigenous, having been imported from Burmah.

My anti-leech panoply also enabled me to secure a large and careful study of the magnificent avenue of old India-rubber trees just outside of Peradeniya Gardens. Surely no other botanical gardens in the world have so stately and

unique an approach. One of these grand trees might well be the pride of any garden, and here we have a double row of giants, interlacing their great boughs so as to form a complete canopy of glossy dark-green foliage, while the smooth silvery grey stems are buttressed by a labyrinth of huge snakelike roots, overspreading the whole ground for about a hundred feet round each tree, and of course all coiled and intertwined like a nightmare of writhing pythons! But when you look closer, you see that these roots are all flattened, so that they really form a maze of low walls.

Of course this noble avenue of *Ficus elastica* is prized for its beauty. But now that Ceylon so fully recognises the necessity of the greatest possible variety in her products, attention has been turned to the cultivation of various species of trees, which, when wounded, weep the large solid tears which trickle down the stem, and harden into the India-rubber of commerce. These tears are really the milk of the tree, totally distinct from the sap, and flowing in separate channels: being of the nature of an excretion, and the tree being nowise dependent on it for nourishment, its removal does the plant no injury.

It is obtained by bleeding the young trees with a pricker, which can be done daily for a considerable part of the year (as many as 240 days are spoken of as possible), the instrument used being either a small double wheel like a spur with sharp points, or else one shaped like a V, with sharp cutting edges, which stabs right through the outer bark. Coolies engaged in stabbing the trees and scraping off the tears shed on the previous day, can collect about half a pound in the course of a day's work.

This quantity, however, varies greatly, the yield of the *Ficus elastica* being only about ten per cent of pure milk,

whereas the Para rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis*), which is the most valued in commerce, yields about thirty per cent. The Ceara rubber also yields much milk of excellent quality, and would grow well at no cost of cultivation beyond that of planting, on thousands of acres now abandoned to weeds or thickets of lantana and guava. But the trees are slow-growing, and it is as yet a question whether the crop can be made to pay the expense of collecting it.

This cultivation is therefore experimental, as is also that of the various gutta-percha-yielding trees of Malacca and the Malayan Archipelago—trees whose thick white milk, lying between the bark and the wood, is collected in the Malayan forests by cutting down the whole tree, and even then only extracting a very small proportion of the milk, not more than $\frac{1}{38}$th it is said! though it is believed that, by pounding and boiling the bark, the whole might be obtained. No wonder that Sir Joseph Hooker has said that "the time cannot be far distant when the natural sources of gutta-percha will be definitely used up."

Seeing how very large and ever-increasing is the demand for both caoutchouc and gutta-percha, it would certainly be satisfactory if their cultivation in a British colony can be made to pay.

I returned again and again to the stately India-rubber Avenue, and became a familiar visitor in the cool shady gardens, for which it would be impossible to imagine a more perfect situation than this beautiful semi-tropical basin, secure alike from the parching heat of Colombo and from the sharp frosts of Nuwara Eliya. Here the heat is tempered by the heavy rainfall attracted by the surrounding mountains, producing a warm steaming atmosphere, in the highest degree favourable to luxuriant growth.

The garden is so called by courtesy, for it rather resembles a combination of park and shrubbery: the late Director, Dr Thwaites, who for so many years was the presiding genius here, deemed flowers of very small account, his affections being all absorbed by trees and foliage. But viewed as a park, it is beautiful. There is none of the stiffness of a botanical garden; nursery grounds are kept well out of sight; and all manner of ornamental shrubs, and clumps of noble trees, with here and there some gigantic specimen of the sacred banyan or other member of the great fig family, are picturesquely sprinkled over well-kept verdant lawns.

Several magnificent groups of foreign palms are especially attractive. The king-palm of Havannah, the oil-palm of Guinea, all the most remarkable members of the great palm-family to be found in India, China, Africa, and South America; palms from Seychelles and from Brazil, with huge fan-shaped leaves, or gigantic feathery fronds—all meet here as on a neutral ground, where they unite to form one beautiful combination, a most admirable family gathering! Nor are the indigenous palms lacking: all are here assembled in one noble group, including the strange *Katu-kittul*, "the thorny palm," the stem of which grows to a height of about eight feet from the ground, and is thickly coated with long sharp thorns—a most unpleasant tree to brush against in a thick jungle.[1] There is also a species of dwarf date-palm, only four or five feet high, which is indigenous in the hottest parts of Ceylon, but its fruit is almost worthless; and there is a sago-palm which, however, the natives do not take the trouble to cultivate for the sake of the pith, though they

[1] This used to be called the *Caryota horrida*, but I believe modern botanists class it as a thorny species of areca palm.

do prepare a beautifully white flour from the nuts, which grow in clusters like those of the areca. This also is a dwarf palm, rarely exceeding fifteen feet in height, and peculiar to the hot dry districts. Its foliage is very light and feathery. The flour prepared from the nuts makes excellent cakes, which, with wild bees' honey, have sometimes proved precious to sportsmen in remote jungle villages.

The Seychelles contribute a fine specimen of their own particular palm, the *coco-de-mer*, which was so long known only by the great double-nuts (shaped like a kidney when cut open), which tidal currents floated far out on the Indian Ocean and to the shores of the Maldive Islands, where they were occasionally picked up by sailors and brought home to puzzle botanists. It was not till last century that the parent palm was discovered in the Seychelles, and it was found that the palm, with a fruit like twin cocoa-nuts, bears a crown of huge fan-shaped leaves, akin to those of the palmyra palm, crowning a stem a hundred feet high.

The garden covers about a hundred and fifty acres,—a most fertile peninsula of rich alluvial soil, encircled on three sides by the Maha-velli-ganga.

Among the lovely things which grow wild in rank profusion on the banks of that beautiful river, and which in all that part of the country is so abundant as to be considered rather a troublesome weed, is the delicate sensitive plant,[1] with its dainty blossoms like balls of pink floss silk, and the fragile jointed leaves like fairy branches, each edged with tiny leaflets, of which we treasure such poor little specimens in our English greenhouses, and, as children, watch with ever new pleasure to see how at the gentlest

[1] *Mimosa sensitiva.*

breath, or the accidental touch of a fly, all the little branches droop, and the leaflets fold themselves closely together.

Here you watch a lizard or a squirrel run down a tree and brush the nearest leaves, and as they instantly shrink and fall, all the others take alarm, and you see them closing their leaflets as though an electric thrill has passed from one to the other.

Do you remember how Longfellow refers to these sensitive leaves when speaking of Evangeline's strange forebodings of ill?—

"As at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has attained it."

The unconscious action of these leaves always seems to me a perfect illustration of that sense of dull aching anxiety which is so nearly akin to physical suffering, and which is so expressively described as *serrement du cœur*—a phrase for which we have no English equivalent.

Splendid clumps of bamboo, imported from Java and Malacca, are mirrored in the broad glassy stream, and truly in the whole vegetable world I know nothing more beautiful than these monarchs of the grass kingdom, with their jointed stems, like polished green or yellow marble, and exquisite plumes of feathery foliage, growing in clumps upwards of a hundred feet in height, and curving gracefully like branches of gigantic ostrich feathers.

It is scarcely possible to realise that such stately growth can all be the work of one season, but so it is, for, though some species are about thirty years before they flower at all, yet, in common with the humblest grasses of the field, the

bamboo flowers but once and then dies, to renew its glory in the following year. On an average, each clump numbers about sixty stems, all springing from one hidden root, which creeps beneath the ground, throwing up stems here and there. These peep above ground during the rains, about July, and shoot up at the rate of 12 inches in twenty-four hours.[1] The Malacca bamboo, which is the largest known species, continues growing till it attains a height sometimes considerably above a hundred feet, with an average diameter of 9 inches. The common bamboo indigenous to Ceylon is a very much smaller plant with a yellow stem.

Strange to say, some species of bamboo flower gregariously, all those in one district coming to maturity in the same year, after which no flowers of that species will blossom till a new generation has come to full age.

The male and female plants are distinct: the latter are by far the most numerous, and yield the light hollow stems, jointed at regular intervals by thick wood forming distinct partitions, so that each bamboo is in so many water-tight compartments, ready to be divided into so many buckets or boxes. In the gardens a section of the large green stem is sometimes used as a secure packing-case wherein to send cut-flowers to a distance. Joints of bamboo form the handy flower-pots in which baby plants are reared, and tough palm-leaves supply the tickets on which their names are inscribed.

The stems of the male plant are all solid, and, though very light, form a strong prop. They are used in administering corporal punishment — that *bamboo backsheish* with the

[1] Hence one form of the diabolic Eastern methods of execution by impaling. The victim was firmly secured in a sitting posture over a vigorous young bamboo, and was there left to perish by its growth.

promise of which some Europeans in Eastern lands are wont so pleasantly to encourage their servants!

(In some countries forest fires have, apparently with good reason, been attributed to the friction of dead clumps of bamboo, ceaselessly rubbing against one another during a strong breeze. Of course the tiniest spark thus kindled would find the most inflammable of fuel in the mass of dry dead leaves, and a single clump would form such a magnificent bonfire as might well start a fearful conflagration.)

Had these gardens done nothing but naturalise these and many other ornamental trees and shrubs, they would have done good service to the colony. They render more practical benefit, however, by supplying seeds, plants, and cuttings for gardens in all parts of the Isle, and by the experimental culture of all products likely to prove remunerative in the hands of planters in the various districts, highland or maritime.

In order to carry out this mission more practically, Government gardens have been established at various altitudes. One here; a second, as we have seen, within the influence of frosts, on the flanks of Hak-galla beyond Nuwara Eliya; a third at Henaratgoda; a fourth in the north-west, in the very dry heat of Anuradhapura, where its existence has only become possible since the restoration of the ancient tanks; and a fifth at Badulla, in the south-east. These embrace climates so varied that there are few desirable plants which cannot be successfully cultivated in one or the other, and thereafter multiplied for the use of all desirous of varying their investments.

[1] I have already described many of the innumerable uses of the bamboo as food and drink, salve and physic, instruments of music and of war, domestic and agricultural, in 'In the Himalayas,' pages 505 to 507. Published by Chatto & Windus.

One charm of these gardens is that all manner of beautiful climbing-plants, trails of the glossy betel-vine, orchids, and pitcher-plants have been encouraged to establish themselves, and so to clothe and veil many of the trees as to do away with all the stiffness one is wont to associate with a botanie garden. Moreover, all harmless living creatures are here protected; so birds are numerous, especially the flights of bright green parrakeets with scarlet bills, and, alas! most unmelodious voices.

Some trees find speeial favour with the flying-foxes—*woulla*, as the natives call them—and a whole colony, numbering perhaps from fifty to a hundred, of these strange bird-beasts hang themselves up to the boughs by their hind claws, and there sleep all day, swaying gently in the breeze, and resembling some odd, large, dark-brown fruit. At sunset they awaken, unfold themselves, spread their heavy wings, flap them, raise their heads, finally unhook their hind claws, and fly off on their nocturnal foraging expeditions in seareh of fruit, fluttering about the fruit-bearing trees in the twilight, to make sure of finding just what they like best for their nocturnal feast. They are endowed with very sharp teeth. They really are hideous large bats, with leathery skin and wings eoated with reddish hair, and measuring about four feet from tip to tip of wings. Though always interesting to watch, they are eertainly not agreeable to the sense of smell, and the corners habitually haunted by these creatures are decidedly unpleasant.

Very different is the faseinating flying squirrel, which is found ehiefly in this neighbourhood, from Rambodda to Matelé, a soft furry pet. Though larger and softer, it considerably resembles our own as it springs from tree to tree; but suddenly, when leaping from some high bough, it expands

its four legs, which are connected by a fur-covered membrane, and it appears transformed into a flat square of fur, silently floating at will, without any apparent exertion beyond that of a slight depression of the long bushy tail, which acts as a rudder—apparently a delightfully easy mode of travelling. When the creature alights on grass or trees, it folds up the wing-like membrane which lies along either side, and it resumes its appearance as a squirrel.

As to other squirrels, they are allowed to scamper in peace all over the place, so I suppose they are not so destructive to timber as we find them in Scotland. Active little lizards of various sorts dart in and out of their hiding-places, or bask in the sun; and sometimes we saw strange creatures of the mantis family, leaf-insects and stick-insects, which we could scarcely believe to be anything but brown or bright-green leaves, or else leafless twigs. Some of these are vegetarians; but I am sorry to say that the very devout-looking "praying mantis," which uplifts its arms so reverently, as if in prayer, is a very ferocious cannibal, and those arms really act as swords with which to help its strong jaws in cutting off the heads of its weaker relations.

Sometimes you may find what look like little seeds, with five or eight sides, adhering to a leaf. These are the eggs of certain of this family, and I suppose they hatch some sort of caterpillar which spins the rough white cocoon from which the mantis eventually comes forth.

Another curious thing which you may have the luck to find hanging from some branch is a little bundle of sticks, from four to six inches long, all laid lengthways like a tiny bundle of firewood. On examination you will find this to be lined with fine spun silk, and you will learn that it is the

nest of a moth,[1] which the Singhalese believe to have once been a human being, guilty of stealing wood, and therefore, in the natural course of nature, reborn in this humiliating form, and condemned thus to keep its sin ever in remembrance. In like manner the pretty black bird, with the tuft of white at the end of its long tail feathers, now known as the cotton-thief, is said to have really so sinned in a previous existence.

Indeed there is nothing animate or inanimate which may not at some time have been a human being, doomed for divers sins to pass through endless transmigrations, so that if you kill a scorpion or a centipede you may possibly be murdering your own grandfather! The comparative degrees thus represented are certainly not flattering to woman,—for a man to be reborn as a woman is a far deeper humiliation than to become a plant or a serpent!

But of all forms of transmigration, that most dreaded is to be born again as a dog or a crow, both being addicted to carrion, and therefore abhorred. This objection, however, applies to pigs, leopards, buffaloes, and many other animals.

Among the creatures in whom one would rather not recognise an ancestor are the millepedes, which we constantly saw crawling about in dry places, or lying curled up like a watch-spring. At first sight one is apt to mistake them for some sort of snake, as they are nearly a foot long and as thick as a man's thumb. Happily, however, they are quite harmless, and only bite vegetables. They are of a glossy jet black, one kind being distinguished by a scarlet stripe down the back, but all alike have upwards of a hundred very short bright yellow legs. After a while one learns to look on them without repulsion, which is more than I can say of any

[1] Of the family *Eumenidæ*.

of the myriapods, though that family includes not only all manner of hateful centipedes, but also some very useful long-legged creatures[1] which devour woodlice and cockroaches.

Another most innocent creature which to a new-comer is somewhat startling is a gigantic earth- or rain-worm, thicker than a man's finger, and often upwards of five feet in length. It is of a bluish-grey colour, and as you meet it wriggling along, it naturally inspires something of the instinctive shrinking one feels towards a serpent. But after a while you become interested in this useful fellow-creature, which works so busily turning up the soil and throwing up large mounds of fine mould. It only comes out after rain.

I fear these allusions may give you a somewhat creepy impression of the beautiful gardens (and indeed in this Eden you must never forget the possible presence of the serpent), so I must just refer to one more attraction, namely, the security in which all manner of birds here build their nests. The daintiest of all is that of the tiny honey-sucker, which is built of moss and wool on the very tip of a branch, where it is rocked by every breath of wind. The opening is covered by a neat diminutive porch, so that the little mother is well protected from any sudden attack.

Another wise builder is the tailor-bird, which, having built a nest neatly lined with moss and hair, proceeds to make a waterproof cover; so, using its own slender bill as a needle, it selects a strip of strong bark fibre (when near human homes it sometimes finds a piece of thread or coloured wool!), and therewith stitches together the leaves of the shrub, laying one over the other, as a slater overlaps his slates. This bird lays very peculiar dark-reddish eggs, like polished mahogany. It is, moreover, musical, and has a pleasant song.

[1] Cermatia.

But perhaps the most ingenious of all nest-builders is the weaver-bird or grossbeak, which weaves a nest of fine grass about two feet in length, and shaped like a chemist's glass retort, with the funnel end downwards. By this long passage the bird enters the pear-shaped nest, wherein the young birds are reared safe from the attacks of snakes and other foes. These delicate structures are suspended from the extreme tip of a branch, so that no enemy can glide up to them, and of course they sway with every breath of air.

These pretty little birds are as gregarious as rooks; so if one selects a suitable tree as its home, so many will colonise beside it that the nests might be mistaken for some strange fruit. Thirty or forty nests together form quite a moderate colony, hundreds of nests having sometimes been counted on one tree.

It is said that the weaver-bird loves to make her home attractive by an illumination of fairy lanterns, which are living fireflies; and lest they should wander, she fastens them with adhesive clay to the light twigs from which her nest hangs suspended by deftly woven cords. Her mate finds a perch near her, and is said likewise to provide himself with a goodly supply of living candles, on which he doubtless breakfasts when he awakes.

CHAPTER X.

THE WORSHIPFUL TOOTH.

Blended faiths—Planet and spirit worship—Hindoo gods and Buddha—The Temple of the Tooth—Oriental library—Tooth on show—Perahara—Originally a Hindoo festival—3 and 9—Days of the week—Other teeth—Christian relics.

Few things appear to me more remarkable—and surely none would more surprise the European admirers of Buddhism—than the very strange manner in which, in most countries where it is practised, it is so amalgamated with the Hindoo mythology which Buddha sought to obliterate, that the practical result of his teaching has been to add one more god—himself—and innumerable objects of worship to those already so numerous.

In China,[1] in Siam, and in Ceylon this is specially conspicuous, but in the latter the Hindoo images are sometimes excluded from the interior of the *vihara*, as Buddha's sanctuary is called. But in any case, they almost invariably occupy a *dewale* or house of gods in the outer enclosure, where there is also a hall for the *kapuas* or devil-dancers—a

[1] See 'Wanderings in China,' vol. ii. p. 38. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. William Blackwood & Sons.

very singular compromise between creeds which theoretically are so antagonistic.

Thus these forms of worship are so curiously blended that the religion of the majority of the Singhalese, though nominally Buddhist, is largely coloured by Hindooism, and still more, whether avowed or only practised in secret, by demon-worship, pure and simple. The extent to which the latter prevails is extraordinary. There is not a village in the most purely Buddhist districts which has not its *kattadia* or devil-priest, whose office it is to propitiate the innumerable malignant demons which are supposed to be accountable for all the evils of every sort which afflict poor human beings. As a minor precaution, every small child wears a charm of some sort—very often it wears nothing else!—and many grown-up folk are similarly guarded.

A people naturally superstitious find demons and spirits requiring propitiation in every tree and well, in dark river and raging pestilence, in malarious swamp or neglected burial-grounds. Planets also claim worship. The Bali or planet-worship is curiously blended with demon-worship, and astrologers are consulted on every event of life.

At the birth of every Singhalese baby its horoscope is cast by one of those, and so highly is the document esteemed that even in the hour of death more reliance is placed upon it than on the symptoms of the patient![1] Again the astrologer is called in to preside at baby's "rice-feast," when some grains of rice are first placed in its mouth. He selects for the little one a name which is compounded from the name of the ruling planet of that moment. This name he tells only to the

[1] In the case of the recent deeply lamented death from hydrophobia of an eminent citizen, it was assumed to the last that the illness could not prove fatal because his horoscope indicated a different cause for death.

father, who whispers it low in baby's ear—no one else must know it, and, like the Chinese "infantile name," this "rice-name" is never used lest sorcerers should hear it and be able to work malignant spells.

Thenceforth at every step in life the counsel of the astrologer is sought. He must decide the auspicious moment for the first shaving of baby's head, or in advancing years for the first shaving of the young man's beard; for starting on a journey, for commencing to build a house. At the Singhalese festival of the New Year, which is in April, the astrologer is ready to give each individual who will pay for them directions how to secure luck for the incoming year. In case of illness he carries far more weight than the doctor. The horoscope of the sufferer is submitted to one of these gentry, who consults his astrolabe, calculates the probable influence of certain planets, and then prescribes the ceremonies or *bali* to be observed, which include incantations over a clay image representing the planet under which the patient was born.

The astrologers are of all castes, from the lowest tomtom-beaters to the highest agricultural aristocracy, and even include many Buddhist priests, although this practice of divination was condemned by Buddha, and is entirely borrowed from the Hindoos. The priests are, however, wise in their generation, and like to reserve so important a hold on the superstitions of their flock.

As to the Kattadias, they continue to make a very good profit on other men's labours, for the people do not venture to sow their fields till the village priest has fixed a lucky day, when, having made their offerings at the shrine of Buddha, they tie bunches of wild flowers and cocoa-nut leaflets on sticks, placed at the corners of each field, to scare away evil

spirits. At harvest, too, the priest must choose a lucky day for beginning work, in return for which he receives offerings of the first-fruits. Sometimes in a corner of the field you may see a small bower decorated with fragrant flowers; within this is placed a sheaf of grain, together with a palm-leaf, on which the Kattadia has inscribed mystic characters dedicating the sheaf to the guardian spirit of the field.

An exceedingly singular superstition is prevalent in districts so far apart as Tangalla in the far south and Jaffna in the far north—the former being Singhalese and the latter Tamil—namely, the use of a very peculiar *patois*, adopted by the villagers only during the most important periods of the paddy cultivation, while sowing, weeding, reaping, and threshing, the object being to deceive the malignant spirits, which are supposed only to understand the language in ordinary use. At the same time, they must be treated with a show of excessive politeness.

The same custom prevails amongst the numerous agricultural moormen in the eastern province. I quote the following interesting passage from an account of these villagers within twenty years ago, by Mr Somanader and Mr A. de Zylva, two of the local Mudaliyars:—

"For threshing, Thursdays are considered the best days to commence, and certain charms and ceremonies are performed to keep off *putams*, or devils, from carrying away the fruits of their labour. The charm is called *arrakku,* which consisted of the following stuffs shut up in a box—viz., silver, copper, iron, coral, pearl, chanks, valampuri (a fruit), chadaimudi (a vegetable), and some arrack in a vial—and buried in the centre of the threshing-floor with margosa-leaves, &c., over which the sheaves are heaped, and the cattle turned on them for threshing.

"In addition to these charms and ceremonies to keep off the

devil from stealing the paddy, they begin to use a peculiar slang to keep the devils ignorant of what is spoken. For instance, the threshing cattle, instead of being termed *madu*, as usual, go by the name *varikkalan*, the meaning of which is productive-legged; the *marakkal* or the measure is termed 'accountant'; the baskets are called *peruvayan*, or broad-mouthed, and every implement has a different name in the threshing-floor. All expressions that have meanings suggestive of decrease or other ill-omened significations are avoided, and the word 'multiply' is always substituted. For instance, the expression

Drive the bullocks . .	is rendered,	Multiply the *varikkalan*.
Sweep the corn . . .	"	Multiply the *poli*.
Bring the *marakkal* .	"	Multiply the 'accountant.'
Fill the basket . . .	"	Multiply the 'broadmouth.'
Bring some water . .	"	Multiply some flood.
Go home for rice . .	"	Multiply home for white.
Call him to take this and deliver it at home	"	Multiply him to multiply this and to multiply at home.
&c.,	&c.,	&c.

"In threshing, cattle are driven with a song, the purport of which is to invoke the deities to give them a good produce."

Just as it was in the early days of Christian teaching in Britain, so in Ceylon missionaries may work with comparative success against Buddhist or even Tamil worship, but it seems scarcely possible to eradicate the superstitious dread of demons, and so in the weakness of illness many so far yield to the persuasions of heathen relations as to consult astrologers or admit devil-dancers. Of course in many cases the luckless patient has no voice in the matter.

But whatever be the illness or calamity in a Singhalese or Tamil home, the devil-priests are sure to be called in, and come escorted by a company of devil-dancers with wild dishevelled hair which is never cut or combed, and wearing hideous

masks to represent the devils who are supposed to have done the mischief. They dance till they are in a state of frenzy, while the Kattadia feigns to be inspired and talks oracularly. An altar is erected, on which are piled flowers and rice, and in some cases of illness a living red cock [1] is brought in, to be touched by the patient and then sacrificed, or perhaps merely dedicated to the demon, and given to his priest.

Among the old customs which still find favour with the natives, notwithstanding the teaching of grave Buddhist priests, are certain "devil-dances," much practised about the New Year. They answer to our Yule mummers; but their masquerading is of the simplest sort, as it consists in a total absence of raiment, for which paint is the sole substitute. The naked brown dancers are grotesquely painted from head to foot, generally in stripes. Sometimes they adorn themselves with the horns and tail of some wild beast, and go about in companies, dancing wildly in every village, with an accompaniment of tomtoms and other instruments of torture to the ear. Such severe exertion entails much drinking of palm toddy; and when, at sunset, the devil-dancers and their followers retire to the palm groves to spend the night leaping and dancing round their blazing bonfires, the scene is as demoniacal as can well be imagined.

A very elaborate festival in honour of evil spirits is sometimes held in a district which has been ravaged by cholera or other infectious disease. A temporary building of boughs is erected and draped with white cloth and flowers; an altar is erected, on which offerings are laid, and priests, who have been duly purified and are fasting, sprinkle the worshippers

[1] For various instances of the identical sacrifice in Scotland in the present half-century, see 'In the Hebrides,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming, pp. 251, 252. Chatto & Windus.

with water tinged with saffron. Then follow incantations, dances, and all manner of games, representing the capture of elephants and buffaloes, mat-weaving, &c. These continue through the night, with an accompaniment of tomtom-beating and blazing of resin to symbolise thunder and lightning. Finally, an earthenware vessel is carried to the nearest stream, where it is broken to atoms, and its fragments are thrown into the water.

The Singhalese especially dread one Yakka (*i.e.*, devil), which is supposed to haunt running water, and to cause much sickness. All those malarial fevers which are so common in the damp jungles, more especially near rivers, are attributed to him. Therefore they strive to propitiate this water-fiend, or river-king, as they call him, by offerings of tiny double-canoes, laden with flowers, rice, and betel, shaded by a canopy of cocoa-palm leaves. After sundry ceremonies, these little barks are launched on the stream; and in times of general sickness, such offerings are so common that sometimes a small flotilla may be seen floating down from beneath the cocoa shade, or stranded on some sandbank in midstream.

In cases of smallpox the goddess Patiné must be propitiated. She is identified with the Hindoo goddess Doorga, by no means a pleasant character. In her honour the Kandians play a game commonly known to the British schoolboy as the tug of war. From among the tough twisted lianas of the forest they cut two tough, strong, crooked pieces, shaped like natural hooks. These they link together, and, having attached to each a long stout cable of rattan cane, also from the jungle, they form themselves into two companies, and, each holding on by the cable, tug with might and main till one of the hooks breaks, when the victors

place the conquering hook in a palanquin, and carry it round the village with shouts of triumph.

It is very necessary for any one interested in the various ceremonies he may chance to see in Ceylon, to bear in mind this curious blending of faiths supposed to be so entirely antagonistic one to another. Especially is this clue requisite to understand the greatest annual festival of Kandy, known as the Perehara or Procession, which is generally assumed to be a great Buddhist ceremonial, whereas it is really all in honour of several Hindoo gods and goddesses, the Buddhist's part being simply the nominal loan of a relic —in truth, the loan of an empty shrine!

But seeing that the relic in question claims to be no less a treasure than a veritable tooth of Gautama Buddha, and is the object of unbounded reverence to all the many millions (somewhere about 400,000,000) who worship him, and a relic for the possession of which bloody wars have been fought, and incredible sums of money offered, it is perhaps not to be wondered at that the priests take good care to lock it up securely, before allowing its shrine to join in the procession of relics of the Hindoo gods!

It is said that Kandy owes its very existence as the mountain capital to the fact of this precious bit of bone having in the course of its wanderings been brought here for safety in the sixteenth century; for in those days Kandy was a wellnigh inaccessible village, known as Sengada-gala Nuwara—so named from a great rock which stands in the jungle, just above the Old Palace. But when such a treasure as the great *dalada* came to take up its abode here, its royal guardian was bound to beautify the place so honoured; and the Dalada Maligawa, the Temple of the Tooth, was year by year enriched by the offerings of the countless

throng of pilgrims who braved all the toil and difficulties of the pilgrimage to this mountain fastness in order to do homage to a relic of such inestimable sanctity, and to offer their gifts of gold and silver ornaments, coins, jewels, vestments for the priests, fruit and flowers.

The latter are at all times a graceful feature in this worship, for as none care to appear empty-handed before the altar of Buddha, to whom even such simple offerings as these are acceptable, there are few in all the throng of worshippers who have not some flowers to offer—often white, pink, blue or yellow lotus, or the graceful grain-like sprays of cocoa or areca palm blossom, almost as large as the little child who often carries it. Many women and children make a living by providing baskets of flowers for sale to those who have come unprovided.[1]

(Among the very legendary acts of devotion recorded of the Ninety Kings of the Lion race—for such is the meaning of the word Singhalese—we are told of one who is said to have offered six millions of blossoms in one day to this rapacious tooth. Another daily offered one hundred thousand blossoms all of one sort, and a different flower each day! After all, it is not incredible that the kings who built the stupendous relic-shrines at Anuradhapura, all by compulsory labour, may by the same means have collected blossoms even by the millions if they so willed.)

Externally this famous temple is not conspicuous, being within the precincts of the Old Palace, and partly concealed by the Audience Hall and the Pattipuwa, an octagonal building which is now the Oriental Library, but the whole is enclosed by a moat, with the same very ornamental stone wall which surrounds the lake; and there are always picturesque groups

[1] See p. 85, note.

of people passing to and fro, whether of the laity or brethren of the yellow robe.

Though the latter are happily not so numerous as in the palmy days of Buddhism, when Ceylon supported sixty thousand priests, Kandy is very fully supplied, having two ecclesiastical colleges, the Malwatta and Asgiriya Viharas, both of the Siamese sect—the sect which incorporates so much Hindooism, but whose distinguishing characteristic to the casual observer is that of always wearing the yellow robe so as to leave one shoulder bare.[1] From an artistic point of view, I am bound to say that these stately brown beings draped in saffron colour, and sometimes escorted by an attendant bearing a yellow silk umbrella or a large palm-leaf fan, form very harmonious bits of colour wherever one meets them.

(The symbolic honour implied by the umbrella used to be very real in Ceylon, when the Buddhist priests shared with the monarch alone the privilege of having an unfolded Talipot palm-leaf held over them, with the broad end forward. Ordinary mortals must carry the narrow stalk end foremost, and in presence of a superior must even turn that aside, so as to expose their head to the sun! Priests were further honoured by having their seats covered with white cloth. Sometimes a white or yellow canopy is borne by four men, so as to overshadow the priest. Amongst the gifts sent by the King of Cambodia in 1884 to the Buddhist College of Maligakanda, in Colombo, were a brush made of his own hair, to be used in sweeping the place where the image of Buddha is kept, and also an umbrella ornamented with precious stones. Silver umbrellas figure conspicuously within the Temple of the Tooth.)

[1] See p. 81.

To return thither. The architecture is not easy to describe. The chief characteristics are the low square-cut pillars, the lavish display of grotesque carving and mythological frescoes painted on the walls. At the lower portal we stepped over a beautifully sculptured semicircular stone, and then passing between two wonderful stone beasts and four really splendid elephant's tusks (of a size very rare in Ceylon), we entered the outer temple, where there are various objects of interest,—gaudily painted images of Buddha, gigantic drums and tomtoms, rich draperies, curious great honorific sunshades, &c. Thanks to an influential friend, we were shown many strange jewels and costly offerings sent to the Tooth by many Buddhist kings; but as to the Tooth itself, we were told there was no possibility of our being allowed to see it, as the dagoba containing it could only be taken from its inner shrine once a-year, at the time of the great Perehara, and even then the Tooth was not visible, such a privilege as an actual sight of it being reserved for very special occasions, such as might not occur for years.

When Major Forbes-Leslie had the good fortune to witness an exhibition of the Tooth in May 1828 (when it was exhibited by order of Sir Edward Barnes), fifty-three years had elapsed since it had been openly displayed by King Kirti Sri, and of course comparatively few people had ever since beheld this object of deepest veneration.

After it was captured by the British it was, as a matter of political expediency, retained for many years in custody of the Government, and the people firmly believed that its possession conferred the right of sovereignty.

The exhibition of 1828, which was accompanied with all possible ceremonial, was freely criticised, as it was obvious

to all that the Buddhist relic was being used as the political tool of a Christian Government, and it was stated that many forced worshippers were drawn to its shrine by worldly interest, rather than by any superstitious reverence for the relic.

All writers on Ceylon in the first half of the century agree in saying, that so low had Buddhism fallen in the estimation of the people, that it was in a fair way to die out altogether. Of course, therefore, the priests clung to this State protection, and were bitterly opposed to its withdrawal, when, in 1853, the relic was finally made over to their care, and all outward union of "Tooth and State" ceased. Naturally, they do their best, with jealous care, to foster the mystery and reverence with which it is guarded.

Now, to be at Kandy and not to see the famous Tooth was inexpressibly trying; and though kind friends strove to comfort me by showing me many treasures, including exceedingly valuable ancient books in the Oriental Library, I was inconsolable.

Those, however, were really of very great interest, some being quite unique manuscripts of very great antiquity, and all written, or rather scratched, with styles on long narrow strips of carefully prepared palm-leaf, generally about two and a half inches wide, and sometimes twenty inches long. Each leaf, when written, was smeared with dark oil, coloured with charred gum, which blackened the indented letters, and has preserved the leaves (*olas* is the right word) from attacks of insects. All the leaves, forming a book, are placed between two neat wooden boards, some of which are elaborately painted, others embossed with precious metal, and even gems: the whole are pierced with two holes, and strung together by cords.

These ancient books are written in Pali and Sanscrit, classic sisters alike descended from a long-forgotten Aryan mother-tongue, and which respectively enshrine the most widespread oriental faiths. The study of these dead tongues, especially Pali, is in Ceylon confined almost entirely to the priests, who are *supposed* to master them before their ordination; but it is said that, as a matter of fact, few do so—and no wonder! Pali, which is exceedingly difficult, is *par excellence* the sacred tongue of Buddhism, being that in which Gautama Buddha preached. Even Elu, or High Singhalese, which is the language of literature, differs so greatly from the colloquial, that it is quite a study in itself, just as, in China, mandarin Chinese differs from that of the provinces.

The great histŏrical record of Ceylon, the Maha-wanso, to which one hears such frequent reference, is in Pali.

European students of Oriental learning are specially indebted to two Wesleyan missionaries for first unlocking these stores of long-sealed-up knowledge, and their translations of Buddhist sacred books have proved precious to a multitude of less erudite writers, including some whose sole object is the exaltation of that system against which these scholars toiled so earnestly. These honoured workers were the Rev. J. Gogerly and the Rev. Richard Spence Hardy.

They were led to undertake this task owing to the fact that so soon as the priests of Buddha realised that the new preachers of Christianity were no longer satisfied with a merely nominal profession of the foreign creed in order to obtain Government employment, but insisted on a radical conversion, they roused themselves to resist their progress by violently antagonistic preaching from village to village.

To meet these opponents on their own ground, it was necessary for the missionaries to acquire as intimate a know-

ledge as possible of the very voluminous sacred books. During forty-four years of mission life, Mr Gogerly toiled at this labour of love, producing his first book on the subject in 1848, and persevering till his death in 1862. His friend Mr Spence Hardy tells how year after year found him with some learned priest by his side poring over these strips of ancient palm-leaf, and puzzling his companion by the subtle questions he asked, and the doubts he raised relative to points which had never before been disputed.

When he first propounded his discoveries as to the real doctrines of primitive Buddhism, he was assailed by nearly every Pali scholar in the island, and his conclusions totally denied. But he calmly defended his position, and by numerous quotations from their most authoritative writings, this solitary Western student was able to lead these, the most profound expositors of Buddhism, into its deepest mysteries, and prove that they were utterly wrong in their estimate of its most essential principles.

So wrote Mr Spence Hardy, who carried on his share of the same work till, in 1865, he returned to England, not only leaving behind him a reputation for profound scholarly learning, but having awakened the more thoughtful Buddhists to perceive their manifold departures from the very law for which they profess such reverence. His works on 'Eastern Monachism,' and his 'Manual of Buddhism,' published in 1850 and 1853, were among the first to awaken the interest of English readers in the faith of 470,000,000 of their fellow-men.

Some notion of the literary labour represented by those books may be formed from his list of authorities, consisting of 467 works, of which 237 are in Pali, 80 in Sanskrit, and 150 in Elu (*i.e.*, written Singhalese), all of which were collected

by himself in Buddhist monasteries; some of the latter are so voluminous, that one alone fills two thousand palm-leaves, each twenty-nine inches long, and inscribed with nine lines of verse. As to the sacred writings in Pali, one of the most celebrated contains 592,000 stanzas, and another (which is known to be thirteen hundred years old) contains 361,550 more, so that the study of these brittle palm-leaf pages—dimly inscribed with such intricate characters—must indeed have proved a toilsome task, suggestive of strained and aching eyes.

Well it is for students that Buddhistic literature in Ceylon was so effectually thinned by ruthless Malabar conquerors in their various raids,—by none so resolutely as by Rajah Singha, who about A.D. 1590 became a convert to Brahmanism, and, in his zeal for that religion, sought to destroy all Buddhist books, and delighted in collecting heaps as high as a cocoa-palm and burning them.

Besides the sacred and historical writings, the monastic libraries contain a multitude of works on astronomy, physics, and mathematics; a curious detail being the extraordinary number of grammars, almost all of which are written in rhyme.

After all, fortune favoured me in my ecclesiastical sight-seeing, for on my return to Kandy in the month of February, after a pilgrimage to the Holy Footprint on the summit of Adam's Peak, I found to my unbounded satisfaction that the authorities of the great temple had resolved to raise money for its repair by a real exhibition of the Holy Tooth, instead of merely lending its dagoba to be carried in procession. So it had been disentombed from its guarded shrine, and was actually on show! The town was swarming with pilgrims in their gayest holiday attire, assembling from every corner of

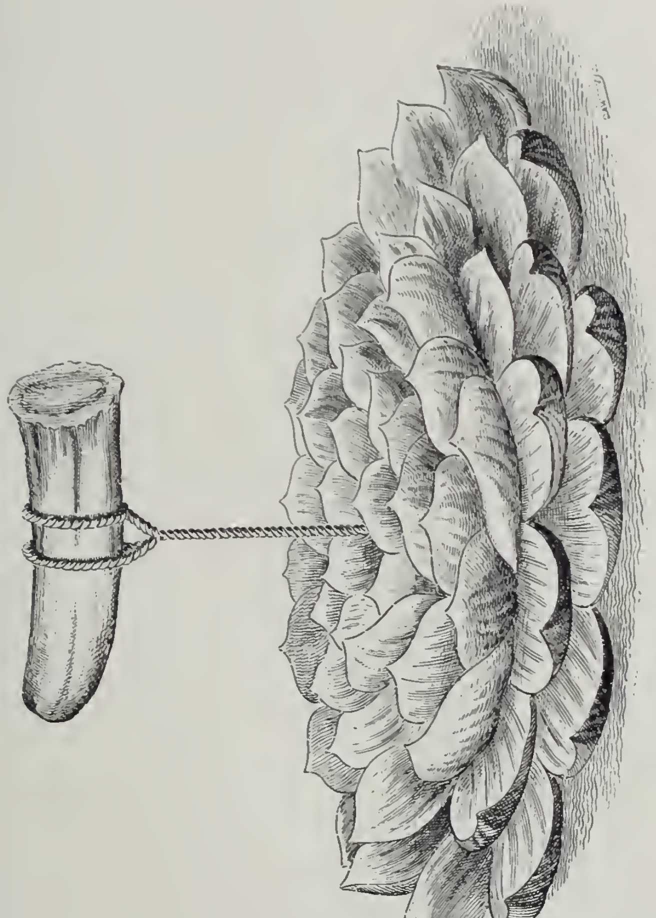
the country to gaze on the precious relic, and pay their offerings into its treasury.

Within the temple the scene was striking in the extreme, both as regarded its human interest and as an artistic study of rich colouring. For crowds of most reverent worshippers, men, women, and children, almost all bringing flowers as well as more enduring gifts of jewels, money, and pieces of silk, were all pressing towards the farther end of the temple, which was now arranged as a sort of chancel, hung with rich draperies and curtains which could be drawn at will, and there on a slightly raised platform were grouped a phalanx of brown-shouldered yellow-robed priests of all sizes and ages, from those who might have been grey-headed had they not been so closely shaven, down to quite small boys. With them stood the great laymen associated with them in the charge of the temple and its property, all in the rich dresses of Kandyan nobles, with the large-sleeved jacket and jewelled hat. The greatest of them was dressed in the same style, but his clothes were white and gold.

All these were grouped around a temporary altar—really a silver table supposed to represent a lake on which the golden lotus floats. Thereon stood an octagonal cupola of solid silver and gold, supported by slender pillars. In front of this were three miniature crystal dagobas or bell-shaped relic shrines, each resting on a square base, and two golden candlesticks with lighted candles. In the small dagobas on either side were displayed priceless jewelled objects—royal gifts.

But all eyes were riveted on the central shrine, of purest crystal, within which lay a large golden lotus-blossom, from the heart of which, upheld by a twist of gold wire, was upraised the worshipful piece of yellow ivory, which to the unquestioning eye of faith actually passes for a human tooth!

BUDDHA'S TOOTH ON A GOLDEN LOTUS BLOSSOM, KANDY.



I can only say that it is well in keeping with the gigantic footprint on the summit of Adam's Peak, being nearly two inches long and as thick as my first finger. Here is an exact portrait of it, which I secured by returning in the stream of pilgrims day after day, and making a pencil sketch the next moment on a scrap of paper in the palm of my hand, to be corrected again and again till it was perfectly accurate. For to be caught attempting to make a picture of it would be the direst offence in the eyes of the priests. Not many years before, the Emperor of Siam had sent large offerings to this temple, and his ambassadors were accompanied by a Chinese artist, whose sole mission was to procure such a drawing as this, that his Majesty, though debarred from making pilgrimage in person to the shrine, might at least be able to realise the exact appearance of the priceless relic. This request was refused with the utmost scorn. Only think what a valuable letter of introduction my sketch might have proved had I chanced to visit Siam!

I always found the priests and people alike interested in the progress of all my pictures, but their jealous terror lest I should draw *this* was extreme; and when, a few days later, I expressed a wish to sketch the general scene of the interior of the temple during the adoration of the tooth, their fear lest I should include the relic knew no bounds. Being accompanied by several influential men, and having obtained the consent of the Dewa Nilami, who stood beside me, I was rash enough to begin work quite undisguisedly, sitting on a raised dais in the middle of the temple, and, worst of all, produced my opera-glasses (the never-failing companions of all my wanderings, and source of endless wonder and delight to many a simple soul in remote regions of the earth).

This proved too much for the priestly mind. In a moment

there was a hubbub of alarm, the curtains were drawn in front of the relic, and a procession of yellow-robed brethren headed by the high priest swept down upon me. The latter deliberately put on his old spectacles, and demanded a sight of my work. He rubbed his nose over it in vain. Luckily I had not there drawn the actual tooth; in fact, from where I sat I could not possibly see it, as we all strove to prove to him. But then he maintained that the magic glasses had doubtless revealed it, and he must look through them, which he accordingly did, holding them the wrong way, however, to the quiet amusement of the more enlightened bystanders. Naturally, he did not see much.

Eventually he was in a measure pacified, and allowed himself to be drawn into a conversation (of course through an interpreter) concerning our mutual pilgrimages to many holy shrines, of which I had happily visited a very great number, in all parts of the island—a fact conferring on me a load of sanctity which, albeit involuntary, made me an object of envy to many of the younger priests.

They, and even the old priest, were greatly mollified by my promising to show them drawings of several of these, which I accordingly brought with me on the following day. But from that time I was conscious of a strong terror of my presence within the temple, more especially on the last day of the festival, when, the exhibition of the relic being over, I was happily included in a select party of Europeans, who by special favour were permitted to be present in the innermost shrine up-stairs to witness the restoration of the Tooth to its secure prison, which really is an ornamental "safe," only about twelve feet square, an upper chamber protected by massive doors of richly wrought brass and silver, which are always locked. Over each door is suspended a large

silver lotus-blossom, and the room is draped with white and gold brocade and priceless Indian shawls.

The whole was artificially lighted, and very hot, as well it might be, seeing how many eager spectators as well as guardian priests crowded into that tiny sanctuary, the atmosphere being, moreover, heavy with the scent of temple flowers. Many ceremonies had to be observed ere the Tooth was safely housed. First it was laid in a case resembling a richly jewelled thimble-case, but, as no human hand might touch the sacred ivory, it received the honours of the white cloth; in other words, it was tilted off its perch above the golden lotus, on to a fair linen cloth, from which it was dexterously slipped into its case. (I have already mentioned that in Ceylon, as throughout the East, all favoured guests receive "the honours of the white cloth"; that is to say, a linen covering is thrown over the seat prepared for them, and a strip of linen—probably the spare garments of some of the bystanders—is laid on the ground, that they may walk over it on first entering a house.)

The tiny jewelled case was next enclosed in a golden dagoba, encrusted with gems, which was formally locked by one of the chief priests, who retained possession of the key. This was enclosed in a similar relic-shrine, one size larger, and locked by another priest, who retained that key. Then it was deposited within a third reliquary, and was locked by the Dewa Nilame, the great lay authority of the temple. I regret to say that he who held this office at that time was an apostate from the Christian faith, which he had professed until this honourable (some say lucrative) position devolved upon him, and Judas-like he found the care of the bag too much for his principles.

The several locks being, as we have seen, in the charge of

three distinct persons—two priests and a layman—it follows that each must of necessity be present when the relic is displayed, for the greater safety thereof. Thus secured, the triple shrine (together with various priceless offerings, the gifts of divers kings, including many strings of the finest garnets, a tree covered with gold and silver roses, a jewelled bird and crocodile, an image of Buddha carved out of one gigantic emerald about three inches long by two deep, and chains and ornaments without number) was deposited in the Karandua, which is a large dagoba of silver-gilt, five feet in height, and about three feet six inches in diameter—beside which were placed the crystal relic-shrine in which the Tooth appears when on show, and one or two others. I have seen it stated that the inner casket is enclosed in a nest of nine golden dagobas. These may have been added, but I certainly saw only three, as described the following morning in my journal, and also in a letter now beside me.

All these relic-shrines (like the gigantic dagobas which are scattered all over the island, each containing some saintly fragment) are made in the form of a bell (consequently circular), resting on a square base. Tradition declares that the first ever built was designed to resemble a bubble floating on water. That which contains the tooth is overshadowed by the sacred umbrella of gold or silver, symbol of sovereignty, while above it hang gold and silver lotus-blossoms and costly silk brocades.

Finally, the strong iron cage with open bars was locked and sealed with much ceremony by the three great authorities, each with his own signet. Then the metal doors of the inner sanctuary were locked by one of them, and the down-stairs door by some one else (I think each has two locks!), so all was once more safe, and we adjourned to the balcony of the

Octagon Library, thence to witness the start of the great annual Perahara, or procession of elephants, bearing relics from the four principal Hindoo temples, and also from the Delada Maligawa, which contributes its entire stud of elephants to grace a festival of prehistoric origin, but supposed to have been instituted in very ancient days in honour of the birth of Vishnu, in his character of Krishna, the Sun-god.

Certain it is that this festival was celebrated annually for many centuries before the Buddhists recognised it in any way; and it was not till the year 1775 that it was deemed expedient to incorporate it as a Buddhist festival, and King Kirti Sri assigned the place of honour in the Hindoo procession to the Holy Tooth.

This innovation was quite a sudden thought. The king had invited certain Siamese priests to Ceylon to restore the highest order of the Buddhist priesthood—the Upasampadawa—and these hearing the noisy preparations for the Perahara, and learning that it was a festival solely in honour of Hindoo gods, took umbrage thereat, whereupon the king commanded that that very evening the shrine should be carried at the head of the procession in his own howdah, and that thus the ceremony would be in honour of Buddha as well as of the gods.

This amalgamation was no novelty—for so early as A.D. 413, when Fa Hian, the Chinese traveller, visited the kingdom of Khotan, he there saw a procession in which the image of Buddha was carried in company with those of the Hindoo gods Indra[1] and Brahma, and of the Toegri of the

[1] Buddha ought surely to be on the best of terms with Indra; for it is recorded in the Jātaka, No. 316, that in one of his many transmigrations Buddha had been born as a hare, which, beholding a starving Brahman, tried to roast itself, that the Brahman might eat and live. But the Brahman really was the great god Indra, who, to reward the wise hare, promised that

Moguls and the Lha of the Thibetans. These images were set in a great four-wheeled car with silken curtains, forming a pavilion 18 feet in height. This was drawn round the city, all the streets having been swept and watered, and the houses decorated with tapestry and banners in token of rejoicing.

Again, in Central India, he witnessed a great night festival, when the city was illuminated, and there were theatrical representations and wrestling-matches in honour of Buddha and the other worshipful gods and heroes, whose images were placed on no less than twenty highly decorated cars. That was a Perahara on a very grand scale.

So now the supposed relic of Buddha shares the homage which previously was bestowed only on the (equally authentic) bows and arrows of the gods, whom he did his best to discredit, and his priests salve their consciences by taking no part in the procession, beyond lending the temple elephants and the shrine purporting to contain the Tooth, together with its octagonal canopy of silver-gilt.

These we saw placed with great ceremony on the back of the largest and most richly caparisoned elephant, the whole being overshadowed by a rich canopy raised on high poles, carried by six men on foot. The great elephant was escorted by two lesser elephants, one on each side of him. On these were mounted several headmen clothed in white, and bearing baskets of flowers, which from time to time they threw towards the empty shrine. Behind them sat attendants holding gold and silver umbrellas of state.

its good deed should be made known through all ages. He, therefore, squeezed the Himalayas, and with their essence he drew on the face of the moon the figure of a hare, whence, in Hindoo works, the moon is often described as being hare-marked.

Other headmen in gorgeous dresses followed on foot, and the people bowed down in lowly reverence. Their attitude of worship is to bend the body forward at right angles from the waist, the arms being thrown forward and slightly raised, and the tips of the fingers touching. All shout *Saadu!* which is the equivalent of All hail! the multitude of voices blending in a deep solemn wave of sound.

To us who had just witnessed the scene in the inner sanctuary, this procession was of course a supreme farce; nevertheless it was picturesque and barbaric, as we witnessed it in the moonlight, amid glare of torches, beating of tom-toms, the clanging of brass cymbals, the shriek of shrill pipes, blowing of chank-shells, and contortions of masked devil-dancers, posturing and dancing frantically to the noise of these ear-torturing instruments—truly devil music!—and escorted by a crowd of people fantastically dressed up. Were it not for the dreadful music, there is something very eerie in the silent march of such a procession, owing to the singularly noiseless tread of the elephants and the barefooted crowds.

As to the surprising get-up of the devil-dancers in their truly hideous masks, words fail to convey any idea of it, and a group of elephants in full-dress is always impressive. Like the very stout lady whom Dickens describes as affording such a magnificent expanse for the display of costly jewels, these majestic beasts do offer a large field for decoration, of which the Oriental mind fully avails itself in the use of gorgeous trappings and howdahs, richly embroidered cloths quite covering the huge body and head, and partly covering the trunk. On the face-cloth of the three elephants specially devoted to the Tooth is embroidered an image of Buddha enthroned. The whole is resplendent with gold, and silver,

and jewels, the tusks of the principal elephants being also decorated.

After the elephants belonging to the Delada — *i.e.*, the Tooth—followed those of the Hindoo temples, also in trios, each elephant bearing a sacred relic being escorted by two attendant elephants. Other elephants, forming a double line from the temple gate, knelt down, that the procession might pass between them, ere starting to make the round of the city.

Of course every such scene includes a multitude of details to attract the eye, which it would only be wearisome to describe,—suffice it to say that, though the Perahara of the present day is said to be a far less imposing show than it was a hundred years ago, it is still very well worth seeing. Of course, however, its chief interest lies in its antiquity.

It can be traced as far back as the second century of the Christian era, when Gajabahu returned from a campaign in Southern India, bringing with him a multitude of rescued Singhalese and Tamil captives who had been carried off from Ceylon by the Malabars in a previous invasion of the Isle. He also recovered the sacred vessels of four dewales (temples), and the refection dish of Buddha, which had been carried away about 90 B.C. To celebrate the return of these treasures, on which the heathen used to swear in the Courts of Justice, a great Perahara was held, and, except during certain times of war and anarchy, it has been held annually ever since. But it is probable that it really represents a midsummer festival of far more remote origin.

It is, however, a very movable feast, Forbes-Leslie having witnessed it in 1828 in the month of May, and the Rev. R. S. Hardy in 1834 saw it in August, in which month it was celebrated in 1888 and 1891, while June or July is more

frequent. It begins on the day of the new moon in the month of *æsala*, but from the imperfection of native astronomy this date may vary exceedingly.

Probably the earliest record by an eyewitness which we have of this festival is that given by Knox, who during his twenty years as a captive at large in Kandy, from A.D. 1659 to 1680, had ample opportunities of observing all native customs and ceremonies. He speaks of it as relating solely to "the gods that govern the earth," "the Buddou" having no part in it. The streets were decorated with upright poles from which floated flags and pennons, and between these poles hung fringes of cocoa-palm leaves; and *there were lighted lamps all along both sides of the street both by day and night.* These very primitive lamps consisted of cocoa-nut shells filled with their own oil, and a wick floating in it. These were stuck on low posts—frequently banana stems—all along the road.

The procession was headed by forty or fifty elephants, with brass bells hanging on each side of them, which tinkled as they marched. Next followed men dressed up like giants, and after them a great multitude of drummers, trumpeters, and pipers: each chief brought his own company of awful musicians, and picturesque attendants bearing great palm-leaf fans and flat-topped state umbrellas. Then several companies of the women engaged in the service of the temple as washerwomen, and potters, and other trades, *walking three and three in a row, holding one another by the hand.* Between each company went dancers and musicians. Then followed the men of the washer caste carrying painted sticks, and those of the potter caste carrying cocoa-nut blossoms in earthen vessels. Next came three elephants, on each of which were mounted two priests, one to represent the god of one of the

three chief temples, and the second holding his honorific sunshade. The central elephant marched slightly in advance of the other two, and was covered with white cloth, his rider, a priest representing the Creator of Heaven and Earth, bearing a painted stick partly wrapped in silk brocade, and from which hung strings of flowers, supposed to be the wonder-working rod that was carried by the conqueror Gajabahu. Before this stick the people bowed down and worshipped, and so great was its sanctity that a cloth was tied round the mouth of the priest lest he should breathe upon it, and so defile it.

After these gods and their attendants followed several thousands of the highest ladies in the land, *walking hand in hand, three in a row,* and dressed "in the bravest manner that their ability can afford."

Finally came a military escort sent by the king, and in this manner they daily marched round about the city once by day and once by night, from the new moon until the full moon either in June or July, every year.

"Two or three days before the full moon, each of these gods hath a palanquin carried after them, . . . in the which there are several pieces of their superstitious relics, and a silver pot, which, just at the hour of full moon, they ride out into a river and dip full of water, which is carried back with them into the temple, where it is kept till the year after, and then flung away, and so the ceremony is ended for that year.

"The greatest solemnity is performed in the city of Candy, but, at the same time, the like festival or perahar is observed in divers other cities and towns of the land."

An exceedingly interesting report was drawn up for Sir Robert Brownrigg, who was the Governor of Ceylon in 1817, by the Dessawe of Wellasse, in which he says that Perahara

is a very ancient ceremony in commemoration of the birth of the god Vishnu, or, as it is stated in some sacred books, in remembrance of his victory over the Assureyas or enemies of the gods.

The mystic ceremonies begin as soon as the new moon is visible, either in the morning or evening, but on no account at mid-day. The Kapuralas or priests of the four principal dewales in Kandy—namely, the Maha or great temple of Vishnu, and those of Nata, Kataragama, and Pattini—have previously secured four logs of sacred wood from the stem of a young jak-tree not yet in fruit, and not more than three spans in circumference. They first clear the ground round the tree, and consecrate it by fumigating it with the smoke of burning resin, smearing it with a preparation of sandal-wood made for the purpose, and further by an offering of a lighted lamp *with nine wicks* (which is put at the foot of the tree), and of *nine betel-leaves*, and *nine different kinds of flowers* arranged on a chair.

This being done, the wood-cutter of the Maha dewale, dressed in a clean cloth, and purified by washing and rubbing himself with lemon-juice, fells the tree at its root with an axe, and cuts the trunk transversely into four pieces of equal length, to be divided among the four dewales, the lowest piece being the property of the Nata dewale, the next of Maha dewale, the next of the Kataragama dewale, and the top piece that of the Pattini dewale. Each log is carried (under a white canopy) to its respective dewale, accompanied with beating of tomtoms.

On the day of the new moon each piece is fixed into the ground in a particular spot in each of the dewales. A roof is erected over it, and it is covered with cloth to keep it concealed, and decorated all round with white *olas*, fruits and

flowers. Thus prepared and fixed, the logs are called *kap* (which signifies pillars), and till the fourth day from that on which these are fixed, the Kapuralas every morning and evening carry round the *kap* the bow and arrows of the gods to whom the temples are consecrated. Carrying the bow and arrows is called carrying the god, and this procession is confined to the precincts of the temple. On the fifth day of Perahara, the Kapurale of each temple brings forth the bow and arrow which are the visible symbol of his god, and places them in the Ranhiligay (? howdah) on the back of an elephant. The four elephants thus honoured, each escorted by two attendant elephants with umbrella-bearers, are led to the Adahana Maluwa, a consecrated place near the tombs of the ancient kings.

(Forbes says the Maluwa was a kind of sanctuary: it was encircled by stones, within which, it is said, the kings had no jurisdiction.)

Thence, after making the circuit of the Nata dewale, the procession proceeded to the Delada Maligawa, the Temple of the Tooth, to the gate of which the Buddhist priests bring forth the shrine purporting to contain the Tooth, which is also placed in the Ranhiligay on the back of an elephant, and takes its place in the evening procession. But in the nocturnal procession at the seventh hour of the night it is not permitted to appear, except on the night of the full moon.

During these five days the five temples represented take precedence by turns.

The report then goes on to tell how on the sixth day a new feature was introduced. From each temple was brought forth a randoelie or palanquin containing a golden pitcher and a sword, each dedicated to a different goddess. For the next five evenings these were carried after the bows and

arrows, and in every nocturnal procession they took the lead. All the women attended as of old, and the young wives and daughters of the chiefs accompanied each randoelie by turns.

On the fifteenth night, which was that of the full moon, at the close of the procession, the shrine of the Tooth was deposited for the night in charge of the Buddhist priests at the Gedige—*i.e.*, Asgiriya Vihara. But the priests and all the properties of the four dewales returned to their several temples, where curry and rice were offered to the gods, and doubtless enjoyed by the hungry human beings, who, thus refreshed, started again in procession with their bows and arrows, swords and golden water-vessels, and journeyed to the banks of the Maha-velli river near Peradeniya.

There they found a richly decorated boat, in which embarked the four priests bearing the four swords of the goddesses, attended by four assistants bearing the golden water-vessels containing the water drawn just a year before. They rowed some distance up the river, and taking up a position in mid-stream, they there awaited the first streak of dawn, when suddenly the four Kapuralas struck the water with their swords, describing a magic circle in honour of the sun, and at the same instant their assistants emptied the water-vessels, and refilled them from within the circle where the swords had cut the waters.[1]

Returning to land, and having replaced the swords and water-vessels in the palanquins, they marched back to the city (being met on the road by any chiefs who had been unable to attend in the night), and went straight to the Asgiriya

[1] Could there be any connection between the Goddess of the Nata Dewale, whose sword cut the bright waters, and the Celtic Goddess of Waters, Nait or Annait, whose worship can still be traced in our Northern Isles? See 'In the Hebrides,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming, p. 205. Published by Chatto & Windus.

Vihara, where the shrine of the Tooth again joined the procession, which then returned to the Adahana Maluwa, whence it had started. It then dispersed, each party returning to its own temple. On that day four bundles of fine cloth, four pieces of sandal-wood, together with gold and silver coins, were given to the four dewales from the king's treasury.

During the next seven days the Wali-yakon was danced in the four dewales by people belonging to the caste of tom-tom-beaters. The dancers wore hideous masks, and they danced to the sound of tomtoms. The dancers of each dewale have certain distinctive characteristics; some jump and leap and turn somersaults, and twirl round till the spectators are giddy. Some wear strings of little jingling bells and bangles on neck, wrists, and arms; others beat cymbals and hollow metal rings.

Then for seven days more, people of the Balibat caste danced round heaps of boiled rice, curries, cakes, and fruits, which they subsequently consumed; and when these fourteen days of religious dancing were over, the four pillars of jak-wood which had been fixed in the four dewales were removed, and, amid much beating of tomtoms and waving of flags, were carried to the river and thrown therein.

Then once more the shrine of the Tooth, and the bows and arrows of the gods, were brought forth for a final procession; and thus, on the morning of the thirty-first day, this prolonged and noisy festival was brought to a close.

(Surely to the people accustomed to such services there must be peculiar force in the Singhalese translation of our Lord's saying that "The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation,"—"not with Perahara," says the Singhalese version.)

All the main features of this festival are still annually observed, such as the *kap hitawima*—*i.e.*, the division of the young jak-tree into the four logs—and the cutting of the waters, but the various companies of women have ceased to appear in the processions. Some new features have, however, been introduced, such as the appearance of young men in the attire of dancing-girls, their arms and legs covered with little bells. Vast crowds from the surrounding country flock to Kandy to witness the various processions, especially that returning from the river after the cutting of the waters, and the scene is very striking as seen in the bright morning sun, beneath a clear blue sky, with so many thousand picturesque people dressed either in white or in gay colours, many carrying umbrellas of all hues, forming a brilliant foreground to the richly wooded hills which embosom the city.

To students of world-wide superstitions,[1] several of these

[1] In Scotland, where the ancient worship of sun, moon, and planets was once as prevalent as in Ceylon, it may still be traced in modern witchcraft, in the reverence for tides, sunwise circles, and these mystic numbers. I have given various examples of these in 'In the Hebrides.' On p. 257 will be found a modern charm to secure abundant milk. A certain flower must be gathered during the flow of the tide, waved thrice in a sunwise circle above the milk-pail, beneath which it is then placed, while chanting an incantation to secure the nine blessings.

Amongst the trials for witchcraft in 1607, I find Bartie Paterson, teacher in Newbattle, accused of having cured a man by visiting him on 3 nights, and each night asking his health thrice 9 times of all living wichts, in the name of Jesus. He also gave him a charm composed of 9 pickles of wheat and 9 pieces of rowan-tree, to be worn continually.

He was also charged with having cured his ain bairn by washing it thrice at every corner of the Dow Loch beside Drumlanrig, and further with administering water from this loch to a sick man, causing him to lift the water-stoup thrice 9 times in the name of the Most Holy Trinity.

For these offences he was sentenced to be strangled at the stake, his body to be burnt, and his goods and gear escheat to the king.

In 1623, Isobel Haldane, suspect of witchcraft, being summoned before the Presbytery of Perth, confessed to having made 3 large circular cakes, each

details are suggestive, such as the recurrence of the numbers 3 and 9—the women three abreast, the temple elephants likewise, each elephant bearing a relic being escorted by one on either side. Then 3 times 3 comes in with the lamp having 9 wicks, and the offering of 9 betel-leaves and 9 kinds of flowers.

Knowing what a hold Bali or planet-worship still has over the Ceylonese, whether Buddhists or Tamils, who naturally worship the Hindoo gods, it is interesting to know that the amulet most highly valued by all is one composed of 9 precious stones,—one to represent each of the seven planets, while the moon has two extra to symbolise its changes.

The amulet as worn by the Buddhists of Ceylon and Burmah is as follows: A sapphire represents Saturn; a topaz, Jupiter; coral, Mars; a diamond, Venus; an emerald, Mercury; a moonstone, the waxing Moon; a pearl, the full Moon; a cat's-eye, the waning Moon. These are set round a central ruby, which symbolises the Sun.

In India the stones composing the amulet of the Nava Ratna, or 9 years, vary in different provinces.

A very remarkable instance of the reverence for the mystic 9 was the magnificent Brazen Temple of Anuradhapura, which was nine storeys high.

As regards planet-worship, it has been pointed out as a strange coincidence that, in the division of the week, the Singhalese should not only have retained the seven days, but should actually have named each after the same planet as

composed of 9 handfuls of meal gotten from 9 married maidens, and had healed sick children by passing them 3 times through the circular cakes to women who were on the other side of the cakes, who then put the children 3 times backward through the cakes, each time invoking the name of the Holy Trinity.

owned that same day, both amongst the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and also in the Western world.

In English, four of the days were filched from the planets in honour of the Scandinavian gods Tyr, Wodan, Thor, and Freya, but across the Channel our French neighbours retain the planetary names Mardi, Mercredi, Jeudi, Vendredi.

DAYS OF THE WEEK IN SINGHALESE.

Day.		Planet	Planet.		Day.
Irida,	from	*Iru*,	the Sun, and *dawasa*, a day	=	Sunday.
Handuda,	"	*Chanduya*,	the Moon, . . .	=	Monday.
Angaharuwada,	"	*Angaharuwa*,	Mars, . . .	=	Tuesday.
Badadada,	"	*Buda*,	Mercury, . . .	=	Wednesday.
Brahaspatinda,	"	*Brahaspati*,	Jupiter, . . .	=	Thursday.
Sicurada,	"	*Sikura*,	Venus, . . .	=	Friday.
Senasarada,	"	*Senasura*,	Saturn, . . .	=	Saturday.[1]

To return to the illustrious Tooth. Its history enters so largely into that of Ceylon that it is worth a few moments' consideration on that score, to say nothing of its exceeding sanctity in the eyes of so many millions of our fellow-creatures. Its adventures were early recorded in the Dcladawanso, a work still extant, written in Elu, and translated into Pali, A.D. 1196. From this, it is said, the story was quoted in the Maha-wanso.

The original article is supposed to have been one of Buddha's four eye-teeth, rescued from his funeral pyre when he was cremated, B.C. 543, at Kusinaga, about a hundred miles to the north of Benares. Of these four teeth, one is said to have been translated to the Heaven of Indra; the other three were secured by the king of Kalinga, the king of

[1] I am indebted for the above to G. W. Mercer, Esq. of Glen Tulchan, long resident in Ceylon.

Gandhara, now Peshawur, and the Naga kings. The two last may perhaps be the ancestors of various other holy teeth which are treasured in various countries, but the second is supposed to be that which is now at Kandy.

Immediately after Buddha's cremation, it was carried off to the kingdom of Kalinga, south-west of Calcutta, where its sanctity was at once recognised, and it received devout worship. Thenceforward the capital was called Danta-poora, the city of the Tooth, and a great festival was annually celebrated in its honour, almost identical with that which is still observed in the same district by the worshippers of Juggernaut. (Kalinga is supposed to be the ancient name for Orissa, and Danta-poora is the modern Puri.)

All went on peacefully, till at length one of these Buddhist kings (determined to establish uniformity of faith throughout his dominions) banished all the remaining Brahmins from the land. These fled to the court of a greater king, who dwelt in the north, to whom the kings of Kalinga owed homage. Straightway an army was despatched, with orders to conquer the Buddhist king, and carry off the relic.

It seems, however, that the invading princes were at once converted on beholding the sacred tooth. They escorted it with all reverence to the Imperial Court, where the wrathful Emperor commanded its immediate destruction. But vain were all the efforts of the Brahmins to annihilate that precious fragment of ivory. They cast it into the fire, but it reappeared from amid the flames safely folded within the leaves of an exquisite lotus-flower; they tried to grind it to powder on an anvil, but the most crushing blows left it safely embedded in the hard iron. Then they made elephants trample upon it, that it might sink into the earth, but once more it rose from its burial, enthroned in the heart of a

lotus-blossom, the petals of which were of fine gold, and its heart of silver.

Still the Brahmins would not acknowledge themselves defeated. They took the wondrous tooth and cast it into the foul sewers of the city. Straightway the sewers disappeared, and in their place there appeared a clear and beautiful lake, whereon floated lilies of many hues, whose fragrance attracted clouds of murmurous bees. This time the Brahmins were silenced, and the Emperor and all his people embraced the faith of Buddha, and paid their adoration to the wonder-working and indestructible relic.

The Emperor appears to have restored the precious treasure to the safe keeping of the kings of Kalinga, for long afterwards, when the reigning king found himself sorely beset by his foes, he bade his daughter, the Princess of Kalinga, conceal this treasure in the coils of her thick long hair, and make her way to Ceylon.

This she did A.D. 311, where King Kirti Sri Megahawarna received it with all possible honour, and built for it a splendid temple at Anuradhapura. It remained in Ceylon till about A.D. 1303, being carried from place to place, as successive kings changed their royal residence; but wherever it was taken, a splendid temple was erected to its honour. Amongst the places thus distinguished were Pollonarua, Hastiselapura, Kataragama, Delgamoa, Kotmalie, Beligala, Dambadeniya, Yapahame, Kurunegala, Kotte, Sitawaka, Delgamuwa, Nilambe, Hanguranketa, Kondesahe, and lastly Kandy. At some of these places ruins of the temples still exist, and I visited several in different parts of the island.

At length the Malabar conquerors captured this bone of contention and carried it off to Southern India. Thither in 1319 the King of Ceylon, Prakrama Bahu III., went in

person to negotiate its surrender, and ransomed it for a price beyond telling. Then with much pomp and ceremony he carried it back to the Isle, and all the people rejoiced greatly, and exalted it to double honours.

Thus it continued to receive the adoration of multitudes until the coming of the Portuguese, who in A.D. 1560 captured it among the spoils of the principal temple at Jaffna, where it was said to have been sent for security. They took it to Goa, and thither the King of Pegu (who, being a devout man of exceeding wealth, had annually sent embassies to do it homage) despatched an ambassador craving permission to ransom it at whatever price might be named—offering a very large sum of money in addition to great political advantages.

Such an offer was exceedingly tempting, as it was justly urged that the heathen would only manufacture a new tooth were this idol destroyed; but the influence of the clergy was exerted so powerfully, that even the temptation of gold was withstood, and the ugly little tooth in its golden setting was brought forth by the clergy in solemn state and placed in a mortar, where with his own hand the Archbishop, Don Gaspar, bruised it to powder in presence of the Viceroy, and of a great assemblage of clergy and laity. The powder was then burnt in a brazier which stood ready, and the charcoal, with this minute atom of ash, was cast into the river in presence of all the multitude.

But true believers declare that the holy tooth was miraculously re-formed in the heart of a lotus blossom, and I suppose they consider its increase of bulk to be part of the miracle, for thousands of pilgrims have continued year by year to flock to Ceylon to adore the lump of ivory which the priests substituted for the lost treasure. The marvel is, that they should

not have replaced it by a human tooth. Surely such an offering would have been truly acceptable to Buddha! and they might have cast lots to know which of them might have the privilege of sacrificing one of his own!

The Portuguese declare the tooth which they captured to have undoubtedly been that of an ape (possibly shed by Hoonooman, the Monkey-god, himself, and slyly substituted by some Brahmin!).

Certainly it does seem strange that so precious a treasure should have been sent to a place so remote as Jaffna, in the extreme north of the Isle, whose inhabitants are mostly Tamils and Brahmins. The Singhalese themselves maintain that the real tooth had been sent for safety to Saffragam. However, the tooth captured by the Portuguese had all the credit of being genuine, and the piece of ivory now held in such reverence was not heard of for many a day, and in the meantime the idea suggested by the Viceroy of Goa, that the destruction of the relic would only lead to the manufacture of another, proved literally true, for in a very short time *two* spurious teeth appeared in the market!

The story of their manufacture was minutely recorded by Diego De Couto, who was intimately acquainted with several witnesses of the various scenes. He tells how in A.D. 1564 Brama, King of Pegu, sent ambassadors to Don Juan, King of Cotta, asking his daughter in marriage (the astrologers having predicted at his birth that he was to marry a princess of Ceylon). It so happened that the King of Cotta had no daughter, but the shipload of rich gifts was irresistible, and as he had brought up in the palace a daughter of his great chamberlain, who was of the blood royal, the king agreed with his kinsman that he should pass her off as his own, and send her to be the king's bride.

They further agreed to have a facsimile of the ape's tooth made of a bit of stag's horn: this was mounted in gold, enclosed in a costly shrine, and conveyed to the house of the chamberlain, who then in strictest confidence disclosed to the ambassadors and their Buddhist priests that the tooth captured by the Portuguese was a fraud, and that the true tooth was concealed in his house.

Of course they besought permission to see it, which he granted with apparent reluctance, and finally led them disguised by night to a room where the tooth lay on an altar amid incense and lights. There they spent the night prostrate in devout adoration, and afterwards offered an immense sum of money and other costly gifts (including the annual gift of a ship laden with rice), if only this inestimable tooth might be sent to the King of Pegu, together with his bride.

The wily chamberlain decided that two such treasures should go separately; so the princess was despatched first, and was received with the utmost magnificence, all the people being required to swear allegiance to her as their queen. Ere long the fact that she was really only the daughter of the chamberlain reached the ears of the king, but the damsel had found so great favour in his sight that he ignored the matter, especially as his ambassadors and the priests then took occasion to tell him about the precious tooth, and of their negotiations to obtain possession of it.

"This," said De Couto, "excited the desire of King Brama, who reverenced that tooth above everything in life, *even as we esteem the tooth of St Apollonia* (though I shall not say much of the tooth of that sainted lady) more highly than the nail which fastened our Saviour to the Cross."

Accordingly he at once despatched the priests and ambas-

sadors to Colombo in a vessel laden with costly gifts, to negotiate secretly with the Singhalese king, who with the greatest solemnity and secrecy made over to them this newest fraud in its costly shrine. On its arrival on the shores of Pegu a multitude of priests and people assembled to adore it, and the King Brama despatched all his nobles in magnificently decorated barges to receive it with due honour, and bring it up the river in state to his royal capital of Rangoon, he himself going two days' journey in a boat richly decorated with gilding and brocaded silks, to meet the splendid procession.

"On coming in sight of it," says De Couto, "he bathed, sprinkled himself with perfumes, assumed his most costly dress, and on touching the raft which bore the tooth, he prostrated himself before it with all the gestures of profound adoration and on his knees approaching the altar on which rested the shrine, he received the tooth from those who had charge of it, and raising it aloft, placed it on his head many times with adjurations of awe; then restoring it to its place, he accompanied it on its way to the city.

"As it passed along, the river was perfumed with the odours which ascended from the barges, and when they reached the city, the priests and nobles of the king, and all the chief men, advancing into the water, took the shrine upon their shoulders and bore it to the palace, accompanied by an innumerable multitude of spectators. The grandees, taking off their costly robes, spread them on the way, in order that those who carried that abominable relic might walk upon them.

"The tooth was at last deposited in the centre of the courtyard of the palace, under a costly tabernacle, upon which the monarch and all his grandees presented their

offerings, declaring their lineage, all which was recorded by scribes nominated for that duty. Here it remained two months, till the Vihare which they set about erecting could be constructed, and on which such expenditure was lavished as to cause an insurrection in the kingdom."

In the following year details of all these transactions reached the ears of Wikrama Bahu, King of Kandy, who was filled with jealousy that his kinsman, the King of Cotta, should have secured so much treasure. He therefore despatched an envoy to the King of Pegu to tell him the whole truth, of how the wife and the tooth he had secured were alike frauds, the genuine tooth being in the safe keeping of the Kandyan monarch himself, who now offered his own royal daughter in marriage to the King of Pegu.

Apparently he also hinted at being open to a bid for the tooth, for King Brama, after due reflection, resolved to hush up the story of the frauds, and therefore merely replied that he was duly sensible of the honour designed for him by the proffered alliance, and likewise by the offer of the tooth, and that as a mark of consideration for the King of Kandy he would send back by his ambassadors a shipload of presents.

Thereupon he prepared two vessels, each freighted with rice and rich cloths, one for the King of Cotta, the other for the jealous King of Kandy. On board of the former he sent all the Portuguese subjects who had been held captive in Pegu, and from the lips of one of these De Couto wrote his narrative.[1] The vessel for the King of Kandy had her cables maliciously cut, and was wrecked in Colombo harbour.

Sir James Tennant, commenting on this story, observes that "the Singhalese never seem to have been scrupulous about

[1] Translated from the Portuguese by Sir James Emerson Tennant.

multiplying Buddha's teeth, for Marco Polo says the great Khan Khubla sent to demand one in the year 1281, and obtained from the King of Ceylon two large back teeth, together with some of his hair."

Long before the days of King Brama of Pegu, another Burmese monarch, Anarapta, who reigned in the eleventh century, sent a mission to Ceylon to treat for the purchase of the tooth, of which "a miraculous emanation" was delivered to his ambassadors. It must have been a solid fact, for the temple in which it was lodged is still shown, attached to the palace of Amarapura.

Sir Henry Yule tells how yet another Burmese monarch, King Nauratha Men-zan, went with a large army into China to invite a tooth of Buddha to come to Burmah. The tusk, as it is called, declined to come, but a duplicate was miraculously produced, and was enshrined in the Shwé-Zeegoong Pagoda, one of the most celebrated temples in Burmah.[1]

The Burmese, however, do not seem to have been satisfied with these duplicate teeth, for when in 1815 the present piece of ivory was captured by the British, the King of Burmah, Minderagu Praio, sent two embassies to Calcutta to treat for its purchase.

The British soon afterwards received a practical lesson in the necessity of guarding this coveted object, for in the insurrection of 1818 the priests in charge of it carried it off to lend its influence to the insurgents. By a happy accident the British recaptured it, whereupon the Kandyans laid down their arms, saying, "As the English possessed the tooth, they had the right to govern."

It was then committed to the care of the Government agent, who kept the key of its shrine, and the temple was

[1] Mission to the Court of Ava.

guarded by sentries till 1847, when objections being raised to such official recognition of idolatry, the relic was returned to the care of the Buddhist priests. Shortly afterwards, however, another insurrection broke out, and but for the timely action of the Government agent in securing the Delada, it would again have been carried off to inspirit the rebels. When all danger seemed past, it was restored to the priests, who have had it in charge for the last forty years.

Of the other teeth supposed to have been rescued from Gautama Buddha's funeral pyre, I was shown one in the Monastery of Kushan, on the sacred mount overlooking the city of Foochow. It is kept in a dull casket within a securely locked shrine. Before it lies an elephant's tooth — an appropriate offering.[1] It is supposed to have been brought to China in A.D. 530 by an embassy from Persia to the Chinese Emperor. The Buddhists in China are said to have several similar relics.

Fa Hian, the Chinese traveller who in the fourth century visited so very many shrines, tells of a tooth which was preserved by the priests at Ladak, and in honour of which a tower had been erected. He mentions another which was treasured by the King of Nakia in Afghanistan.

Mr William Simpson, of the 'Illustrated London News,' has just sent me what he calls "a complete set of teeth"! most of which are mentioned by another Chinese traveller—namely, Hiouen Thsang, who lived in the first half of the seventh century. He records that teeth of the Tatagata were to be found all over India, and as far as Balkh, where he saw a back tooth very much like the Delada at Kandy—namely, about an inch in length, and of a yellowish-white

[1] Wanderings in China, pp. 261-267. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. William Blackwood & Sons.

colour. He says it continually gave forth a lustre of happy augury. He saw another (which is described as a milk-tooth), answering to exactly the same description, in the north-west of Cabul, and one rather larger in Cashmere.

He was told of another enclosed in a stupa or dagoba at Nagarahara, the former capital of the Jellalabad valley.

At Bamian he found quite a collection of teeth. There was a back tooth of Gautama Buddha, and also one of a T'o-Khio Pratyeka Buddha, who lived at the beginning of the present *kalpa*. The latter was five inches in length, and rather less than four in circumference! A third tooth was that of a king who had turned the wheel of gold (Souvarna tchakra radja). This was three inches long and two in circumference.

At Nalanda, the great monastery near Buddha-gaya, he saw a tooth of Buddha an inch and a half long, and yellowish-white. He also tells of a mountain in Gandhara which was called Danta-loka, or Heaven of the Tooth.

Dr Edkins says that in the monasteries of Northern China there are various teeth and other relics of Sakya-muni—*alias* Buddha. He describes a tooth which he saw at the temple called Teu-shwai-sï, which was two inches and a half thick and ten by thirteen in width![1]—a miraculous tooth indeed, and yet insignificant compared with one, likewise attributed to Buddha, which weighs about twenty pounds, and is enshrined in one of the numerous temples which cluster around Mount O-mei, a mighty mountain 10,000 feet high in Central Ssu-ch'un, the great place of pilgrimage for the Buddhists of Western China. Only think how terribly poor Buddha must have suffered before he cut such a wisdom-tooth as that!

Apparently some special virtue attaches to teeth, whatever

[1] Chinese Buddhism, p. 250.

be their origin. In his 'River of Golden Sand,' Captain Gill describes an object held in reverence by the people of Ch'êng-Tu, in Northern China—namely, a stone called "The Tooth of Heaven." "It was merely a bit of sandstone in the shape of a tooth. There was a little house built over the entrance to it, but the roof did not cover the stone itself, for they say that if the stone were covered, the God of Thunder would commit some fearful devastation on the town."

In India a few years ago a small tope was opened by Dr Bird, near the Kankeri caves in the Isle of Salsette, and therein was found a copper-plate recording that a canine tooth of Sakya had once been deposited there. But it had departed.

Another vanished tooth is that of St Patrick—at least there is an allusion in the 'Archæological Journal' (vol. xvi., 1859, p. 150) to the Fiocail Phadraig, or Shrine of St Patrick's Tooth.

Apart from things held sacred, the prices obtained for kindred treasures, even in modern England, are sometimes startling. Imagine Sir Isaac Newton's tooth having been sold in 1816 for £730! The purchaser had it set as a ring, and wore it till the day of his death. "Wanted. A fool and his money." Would not that be the right heading for an auctioneer's advertisement of such goods?

To return to the veritable Delada at Kandy. About twenty years ago the Siamese sent an embassy to Ceylon, offering a sum of £50,000 for permission to remove the Tooth to their own capital. The offer was rejected with scorn. They then begged that the Tooth should be dipped in oil, which they might carry back to their king.

But the ambassadors were not even allowed to look at the precious and greatly coveted object. They appealed to the

British authorities, and appointed an agent to plead their cause. At his request the priests were commanded to produce the Tooth, that he might the better explain their exact wishes. No sooner was the jealously guarded treasure revealed than he produced a small piece of rag, and observing, "This is all my clients want," he rapidly rubbed it over the holy relic as if merely illustrating their wishes, and quickly dropped the rag into a small phial of oil. Thus the oil was consecrated, and endued with sufficient virtue to consecrate tons of oil wherewith to sanctify the whole kingdom of Siam. Of course the priests were furious, and vowed that the Tooth had been desecrated; but the mischief was irreparable, and the ambassadors returned to their own land with their money in hand and a holy oil that was nearly as efficacious as the possession of the Tooth itself.

The account of the Siamese ambassadors and their little phial of consecrated oil reminds me of some very similar use of relics in our own land. Thus Dr Rock[1] mentions that in olden days, "when any widespreading disease befell this land and took off men or beasts of the field, our bishops would send forth orders that the relics in every church should be steeped in holy water, which was afterwards to be sprinkled on the sick or given them to be drunk as a medicine."

Hence arose the fame of the Durham water, wherein had been washed the dead body of St Cuthbert, and the still more famous relic-water of Canterbury, wherein was mixed some well-diluted portion of the blood of the murdered Thomas à Becket (scraped up with the dust off the pavement), a relic which, being carried round the neck of "ye pilgrime," was a sure safeguard against all ill.

We of the nineteenth century would fain believe that

[1] Church of our Fathers.

English common-sense had driven out all such folly. Yet it is only a few years since the daily papers were discussing the curious homage paid annually by hundreds of our countrymen in Lancashire to the poor shrivelled hand of a certain Father Arrowsmith, which is kept in a white silk bag at Garswood, in charge of the Roman Catholic priests; and the sick and afflicted flock thither in hopes that they may be cured of their diseases by a touch of the holy hand. We heard of one poor woman who had travelled many miles to have this healing touch applied to a paralysed side, a curious revelation indeed of superstition in England in our own day.

As we ponder on the strange relic-worship of heathen lands, a stranger vision yet rises before us of the relics still held priceless by Christian people of the Roman and Greek Churches, and of many more, once precious objects of adoration, now lost to the faithful, such as a *Tooth of Our Lord, whereby the monks of S. Medard de Soissons pretended in olden days to work miracles.* Or that arm of St Augustine, which our own Canute commissioned his ambassadors at Rome to purchase for the sum of one hundred talents of silver and one of gold!

We are inclined to smile at the superstition of the Kandyans who carried the Tooth to battle to ensure victory, but we forget that King Robert Bruce so greatly revered the arm of St Fillan that he caused it to be carried by the Abbot of Inchaffray to grace the battle of Bannockburn, and doubtless gave the relic its full share of credit for his glorious victory.

About fifty years earlier, King Henry III. had summoned all his nobles and wise men to meet in London. Multitudes assembled, marvelling for what purpose their presence was required. The king then solemnly announced that the Grand Master of the Knights Templars had sent him a phial con-

taining a few drops of that Most Precious Blood, shed upon the Cross, and *attested to be genuine* by the seals of the patriarch of Jerusalem, and others! He commanded that on the following day a great procession should be formed, to conduct this inestimable relic to Westminster Abbey; and it has been recorded that though the roads between St Paul's and Westminster were deep and miry, the king never took his eyes off the sacred phial till he had safely deposited it in the Abbey, dedicating it to God and St Edward. "Thus," says the old historian, "was all England made to shine with glory!"

Doubtless many remember the fresco in the Grand Master's Palace at Malta, showing the Earl of Cornwall receiving a Reliquary "full of the Blood of Christ." And among the relics at Città Vecchia in Malta are a piece of the True Cross, a fragment of St Paul's arm, and some milk of the Blessed Virgin! Verily Christianity can ill afford to jeer at Buddhist relic worship. If, as seems probable (indeed wellnigh certain), this practice was borrowed by the Christians from the followers of Buddha, the pupils have surely surpassed their teacher in their multitude of strange objects of veneration.

As to the fragments of the true Cross, treasured by all the Churches, it has been computed that, were they all collected, they might suffice to build a ship of the line! This was openly acknowledged by the priests, who rather gloried in the fact: St Cyril, after declaring that the whole earth was filled with this sacred wood, went so far as to compare its amazingly diffusive powers to the miracle of the loaves and fishes!

The tears of our Saviour, and those of the Virgin and of St Peter, were also bought freely by pilgrims to the Holy

Land, and brought home in jewelled caskets, while the hair and toe-nails of divers saints have ever been treasured as priceless relics. Of St Peter's nails it was estimated that enough existed to have filled a large sack, so prolific were the sacred toes of that great apostle. Some of these are still preserved at Aix-la-Chapelle, and the faithful make pilgrimages from afar to gaze upon them!

To such an extent was the veneration for Christian relics carried, that in the days of Constantine it was solemnly decreed in Council that all altars beneath which none were found should be demolished, as a church without relics could not be consecrated; and so, even in the present day, the Church of Rome requires that some holy tooth, hair, or nail shall, on the consecration of every new church, be carried in solemn procession by the priests to the altar, and therein deposited by the Bishop (who stands mitre-less to receive that precious reliquary, hoping perhaps that his own bones may some day receive similar honour). Having duly offered incense, he anoints the covering-stone with holy oil, and so seals the relic tomb, while solemn anthems rise, and prayers are duly said.

We can only account for such strange excrescences of Christianity (professedly the worship solely of One Living Lord) by the assumption that even among ourselves the widespread instinct of ancestor-worship survives to an extent we dare not admit.

How else can we account for the craving for saintly relics even in this wise nineteenth century? In Italy, not many years ago, it led to a scene that would disgrace savages—namely, a free fight over the dead body of a saintly Bishop, which resulted in the populace tearing off every fragment of his episcopal robes as most precious relics; so that at length

the military had to come in and rescue the poor naked corpse, which the civic authorities were unable to defend.[1]

In France thousands annually wend their way to the

[1] This scandalous scene, which occurred at Torre del Greco in August 1872, was thus reported by the 'Daily News':—

"Last Monday, Torre del Greco was in a state of indescribable tumult. The Bishop of Ischia, Monsignor Romano, who was a native of the place, had died, and on that day was to be buried in the public cemetery. Some time before his death popular feeling had declared the dying Bishop to be a saint. When he died his body was first laid out in the church, and thence, on Monday the 5th, followed by an immense crowd, was conveyed to the cemetery.

"But it was not destined to reach on that day its earthly resting-place, for before entering the gate messengers came hastening from the town to announce that the dead Bishop was working miracles,—that one lame man of Sorrento had suddenly been able to walk; that another who for years could only crawl on crutches had thrown them away and attained the use of his limbs; that a young waiter in a café known for years to be dumb had received the use of his speech; with other marvels of the like kind. 'A miracle! a miracle! a miracle!' cry the excited crowd.

"The bearers of the corpse were prevented from entering the cemetery. The funeral procession turned back; and as the coffin was brought again to the church of Torre del Greco, cries of 'Bring out the sick,' 'Bring out the fever patients,' 'Bring out the paralytic,' rang out all along the road, the crowd telling the inmates of the houses before which they passed to carry into the street the sick, that they might participate in the miraculous cures which the dead Bishop was effecting.

"At length the corpse was brought to the church; the large crucifix on the altar was torn down, and the dead body of the wonder-working Bishop put in its place. The deceased had been arrayed in episcopal garments, but these soon disappeared. The populace, in the belief that the powers of the dead saint would attach to every shred of his clothes which they might secure, made a rush—each ignorant fanatic energetically tearing and struggling to seize and carry off a precious relic. So effectually was the corpse stripped that there remained at last only the naked form of the poor Bishop.

"The parish priest in whose church the scene took place, after having vainly attempted to dissuade the populace, seems to have thought that his own safety would be best secured by flight. Meanwhile the local magistrate and the mayor, with a party of Carbineers, hastened to the spot for the purpose of restoring order. The mob would not listen to their exhortations. 'He is working miracles!' 'He is working miracles!' was again the universal cry.

"At this stage of the proceedings the steward, or manager of the church

Puy de Dôme, there to do homage to the "Sainte Ceinture" —the Holy Girdle, supposed to have been worn by the Mother of our Lord—and which was conveyed to the mountains of Auvergne by a crusading Count of Poitou six or seven centuries ago.

Multitudes more make devout pilgrimage to a shrine near Samur, in the Alps of Dauphiny, to purchase holy water from a well said to have sprung from the Madonna's tears, and which, consequently, is an infallible cure for sore eyes.

A leading article in 'The Times,' September 2, 1872, after speaking of the so-called miraculous apparition of Nôtre Dâme de la Salette in 1846, and reminding its readers how the case was tried in a court of law and proved to be a glaring imposture — a poor half-crazed lady having been convicted of acting the part, with the connivance of sundry other people—added, "Yet in spite of this, our Lady of La Salette is now greater than she ever was; a temple of enormous dimensions has risen in her honour; the pilgrims, who, till lately, did not exceed 40,000 to 60,000, are mustering this year more than the average; and the sale of the water from the Holy Well, said to have sprung from the Virgin's tears, realised more than £12,000."

Twenty years have elapsed since that leader was penned, and still the popularity of this Well of Tears shows no symptom of waning.

funds, mounted the pulpit and told the people that the age of miracles had passed away. He might have paid dearly for this untimely announcement had not a sudden and violent ringing of the church bells diverted the attention of the people, and brought them out into the street to ascertain the cause. This diversion was dexterously taken advantage of by the mayor and the other authorities. The doors of the church were shut and barred, the naked corpse was left undisturbed, and before long the arrival of a sufficient military force proved the best preventive against a renewal of such outrages."

Thousands more betake them to the Holy Well at Lourdes in the Pyrenees, which was also sanctified by the miraculous appearance of the Virgin, and which also works wondrous cures on all threatened with blindness, provided they thrice pray, and thrice bathe their eyes with the healing waters. One devout pilgrim was so well satisfied with the benefit he there received, that he published a detailed account of his cure. The book rapidly passed through upwards of forty editions, and while bringing a considerable annual income to the author, has encouraged thousands of fresh pilgrims to press onwards to the same goal.

But we need not go beyond Ireland for cases in point, as every one knows who has visited Our Lady's Well at Knock, in County Mayo, in the middle of August, when deaf, dumb, blind, paralytic, and insane persons may be cured by spending a whole night alone in the adjoining churchyard! Should any one, however, touch or speak to them, the charm would be broken. A wall, near which the blessed Virgin was said to have appeared, had to be taken down, but the mortar was carried to the priest's house, and has ever since been sold in fragments to give virtue to the foundation of new houses. All rain that falls on the chapel is so holy that it is carried home in bottles by the pilgrims. The first fire in a new house must be kindled by a blessed candle bought at this shrine; and if ever a turf fire goes out (which is unlucky), it must be rekindled by the same means.

To bring these strange subjects quite up to date, I must just refer to the exhibition of the Holy Coat, which has drawn such crowds to Trèves (or, as we must now call it, Trier) in the autumn of 1891. As every one now knows, the garment which has been invested with such sacred in-

terest is supposed to be the very coat without seam worn by our Lord on the day of His Crucifixion, and for which the soldiers cast lots.

Where it lay for the next three hundred years, even ecclesiastical legend does not state, but about A.D. 311 a seamless garment of brownish material was brought from Palestine by the Empress Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great, on that memorable pilgrimage when she was supposed to have also discovered the True Cross.

She deposited the Holy Coat in the Cathedral at Trèves, where, in the ninth century, it was concealed from the ravaging Normans in the crypt, and was not rediscovered till 1196, when it was solemnly deposited by the Archbishop within the newly consecrated high altar of the Cathedral, enclosed in a beautiful chest of wood and ivory. Thence, three hundred years later, it was brought forth for exhibition at Easter 1512, when absolution was promised to all who came to do it homage. It continued on show for twenty-three days, during which the Emperor Maximilian held a Reichstag in the town, which brought thither representatives of the kings of England, France, and Navarre, besides numerous princes, dukes, bishops, nobles, and 100,000 pilgrims of lower degree.

Such was the enthusiasm awakened, that Pope Leo X. commanded that it should thenceforth be exhibited once in seven years. The progress of the Reformation, however, rendered this impossible or undesirable. In 1640, during the Thirty Years' War, it was carried for safety to Cologne, thence to Ehrenbreitstein, Würzburg, Bamburg, and Augsburg, where it remained till 1810, when it was restored to Trèves, and welcomed with the wildest enthusiasm.

It was brought back in a waggon all garlanded with

flowers, and every town and village through which it passed held festival. As it entered Trèves itself, all business was at a standstill, altars with burning tapers lined the road, streets were decorated, paths strewn with flowers, men and women wept for joy. At that time it was computed that at least 227,000 persons came to gaze upon it. Again, in 1844, it was displayed to still larger crowds, the total number of pilgrims exceeding a million of human beings, whose adoration evoked such response in the sacred vestment that it commenced working miracles, upwards of a score of miraculous cures of diverse diseases being circumstantially recorded.

And now in 1891, funds being required for the restoration of the Cathedral, it was decided to exhibit the Holy Coat for fifty days, from August 18 till October 6, so as to allow ample time for a multitude of pilgrims to bring their offerings. Large barracks were erected for the accommodation of pilgrims, tanneries and storehouses were fitted up with bedding consisting of sacks of straw, almost every dwelling-house arranged to let the largest possible number of beds at the highest possible price.

The one thought of all the inhabitants seems to have been how to reap the largest pecuniary harvest from the pilgrims. It is said that, with a keen eye to business, no less than four hundred persons applied for licences to open hotels and restaurants. But, besides the provision of necessary board and lodging, there was much ingenuity in devising a strangely varied assortment of objects for sale, such as medallions, rosaries, images, cigarettes, pocket-handkerchiefs, boxes of sweetmeats, even match-boxes, all bearing the picture of the sacred tunic, which was also embossed on the bowls of clay pipes! Near the railway stations there were whole villages of refreshment booths, and for the sale of these catch-pennies.

A single firm ordered 1500 dozens of one picture of the garment.

The city was gay with countless flags; the Bishop's flag, bearing a great red cross on a white ground, floated from the cathedral. Day after day endless processions of picturesque pilgrims with sacred banners poured into the city, wearing the distinctive costumes of their several provinces, and marched about the livelong day chanting Ave Marias and the Litany of the Sacred Coat. Dancing, concerts, and all secular amusements, were prohibited during the fifty days. As some consolation, however, there was granted a general dispensation from all fasting during that period.

The account of the disentombment of the sacred tunic from within the high altar is even more strange than are the details of the enshrinement of Buddha's tooth in its various cases. The provost of the cathedral having read the protocol of the last locking up of the relic in the previous year, three officials opened the high altar, thence breaking out large masses of stone with heavy crowbars. A box about two mètres long was then lifted out and opened, and a long document and a smaller box covered with leather were taken out; within the latter lay another document and a third box of metal, fastened with six seals.

The Bishop threw a red cloth over this metal box, and with the aid of the provost carried it to the treasure chamber, where the seals were carefully examined, and found to be intact, after which the box was opened, and the Bishop took thence a parcel wrapped in blue silk, within which was a wrapping of red silk, and within that of white silk, enfolding the vestment, which he then spread out on the table. No one else was privileged to touch it.

It was found to be in so tattered a condition that it could

not be exhibited. Various experts were consulted, and finally a venerable nun was called in, who proposed that the fragments should be gummed together, the material being too much worn to stand the strain of needle and thread. It seems to have been previously mounted in a similar manner, as a microscopic examination proved it to be a triple garment, the brown linen lying between a coating of purple silk and one of greenish silk, all of very ancient manufacture.

The garment thus renovated was placed full length in an oaken shrine, open in front and lined with white silk, and this was suspended above the altar, beneath a great golden cross, with a background of rich crimson velvet drapery. The cathedral was all decorated with garlands of flowers and evergreens, and a thousand citizens of Trèves declared their willingness to take it by turns to watch day and night beside the precious relic.

On the day of the unveiling, a guard of honour of Knights of Malta in scarlet uniform (all members of ancient Catholic nobility) stood with drawn swords on either side of the shrine, and as the light streamed through stained glass windows on these, and on the very large white-robed choir, and a body of upwards of a hundred clergy in richest vestments, and on a vast company of worshippers, the scene was striking in the extreme.

Thenceforth every day, and all day long, a ceaseless throng passed in a continuous stream up the great marble stairs on either side of the altar, so as to pass in front of the relic. Thousands came by special train, thousands more by steamboat, and large waggons from the country—men and women of every degree, from highest nobles and ecclesiastics to poorest peasants, but the admission of children under ten

years of age was discouraged, on account of danger in so great a crowd. It was found impossible to arrange for the admission of more than 45,000 persons daily, so multitudes had to wait their turn from day to day. In truth, they had need of patience, for not only had the various bands to wait for many hours in the streets, but from the moment of entering the cathedral till he passed out again, each pilgrim took about three hours, progressing at a foot's pace, only a moment's halt for adoration or veneration being possible, when he actually reached the Holy Coat. Almost all carried with them some article—a handkerchief, a crucifix, rosary, image, or photograph, which, at the moment of passing, they handed to an attendant priest, that he might therewith touch the coat, and thus sanctify it for ever.

Day by day, at half-past four in the morning, the cathedral opened, and crowds poured in from the darkness towards the blaze of light, where the Bishop and clergy ministered at the high altar. The pilgrims included many aged and infirm persons—cripples, blind, deaf, dumb, and many suffering from divers diseases deemed incurable, who had come from distant parts of Europe and America hoping to be healed. Those provided with medical and good-conduct certificates were permitted to touch the garment; and pitiful was the intense earnestness with which they awaited the eagerly desired miracle!

Nothing was more remarkable than the quiet and orderly conduct of these vast crowds of poor devout peasants. There was no drunkenness, and the publicans who had laid in incredible stores of beer and wine in expectation of much conviviality, were grievously disappointed at the small consumption thereof.

At the close of the fifty days' exhibition, it was found that no less than 1,925,130 persons had visited the cathedral, and many tardy pilgrims were subsequently admitted to the treasure-chamber in which the Coat was then temporarily enshrined. The united offerings realised an immense sum.

When so-called Christian relics are turned to such profitable use, we can scarcely wonder that the revered bit of ivory at Kandy should in like manner be exhibited as a secure method of raising funds for temple repairs.

In the case of all objects of veneration, it appears inevitable that many claimants for the honour should exist, and so it was found to be in this case, for no sooner was this exhibition of the Trèves relic announced, than various other cities were found to be in possession of a garment supposed to be that which was worn on Calvary. The most determined of these rivals was the Coat of Argenteuil, which was likewise subjected to microscopic investigation, and pronounced by the Pope to have been a genuine garment worn by our Lord, but in earlier years than that of Trèves; so Argenteuil had to bow to this decree, and accept a lower place in the scale of relic-owners.

But perhaps the most singular relics thus brought from sacred seclusion into sudden publicity are "the holy Trousers of Saint Joseph," enshrined in the treasure-chamber of the great church of Maria-Zell in Styria, the recovery of which is likewise ascribed to the Empress Helena on her memorable visit to Palestine. (I was not aware that such garments were worn in Judea in the first century, but here is proof positive!) They are preserved in a glass case behind a screen, in a corner of what is said to be probably the largest collection in Europe of curious relics of this sort. They are said to be much worn—in fact, to have been darned and

patched. Women are not allowed to gaze upon these garments, which, however, are said to have wrought remarkable miracles for some lords of the creation, as is testified in a certain document bearing large official seals, and illustrated by a picture of a happy Croatian couple on their knees, followed by a troop of kneeling children, whose existence is ascribed to the miraculous influence of these remarkable nether garments! A small vignette also shows the happy father with his money-bags, kneeling at the feet of a group of bishops, one of whom is holding up these venerable trousers.

First and last, relic-worship is a singular subject, and the habit occasionally brings honour to most unexpected objects. Thus the author of 'Erewhon' relates that he once passed an Italian woman kneeling in devout worship before a dentist's show-case in the Hampstead Road, evidently believing the teeth to be worshipful and saintly relics! Doubtless they answered her purpose quite as well as any more highly authenticated fragments of humanity.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM KANDY TO ANURADHAPURA.

The Alu-Vihara—Dambulla Rock Temple—Sigiri—Murder of Dhatu Sena — Rita-gala — Restoration of Kala-wewa and other tanks— Ancient system of irrigation — Serfdom — Opening ceremonial — Vigita-pura—Colossal Buddha at the Aukana Vihara.

Of course one of the objects most to be desired in visiting Ceylon is to accomplish an expedition to the ruins of the pre-Christian city of Anuradhapura, in the heart of the North - Central Province, and of the more recent, but almost equally ruined, city of Pollanaruwa, which lies inland on the eastern coast—both buried in the depths of the jungle.

Even now these are not easily accessible to ordinary mortals, and involve somewhat troublesome and expensive travelling, as it is necessary to arrange for hiring a carriage for the whole trip, unless one is content to travel part of the way by a wretched two-horse coach, and the rest by public bullock-cart, which proceeds at the rate of 2½ miles per hour, the bullocks being adorned with necklaces of jingling bells—a hateful addition to the creaking of wooden wheels and the clouds of hot dust. I was, therefore, fully conscious of singular good fortune when the Governor most kindly arranged

that I should form one of his party to Anuradhapura in the month of June; while the Bishop, having occasion to visit many places on the east coast in the autumn, promised that I should then see Pollanaruwa.

Leaving Kandy at daybreak on June 6, we drove down the Ballacaduwa Pass to Matale—*i.e.*, the *Maha-talawa*, or great plain, which lies 560 feet lower than Kandy. It is a lovely drive to a very pretty, long, straggling town, with rich foliage on all hands, and glimpses of a fine river, the Pinga-oya, and beautiful hills crowning all. (A railway is now open thus far, so that this first stage is made easy for travellers.)

I would advise any artist in search of characteristic scenery to ride from here to the summit of Vicarton Gorge, which is about 3500 feet above the sea. It is a very steep eight miles uphill, through rocky coffee plantations—of course without a bit of shade—but on reaching the summit the view is rewarding. You look down between two mighty crags of chocolate-coloured rock, crowned with green forest, to a fertile valley far below, all laid out in thousands of small rice-fields, with here and there hillocks of rock and timber. These are not prosaic angular fields, like the familiar fields of Britain, but a multitude of small crescents terracing every undulation of the land, and at the season when I saw them each was a glittering lakelet. And the great valley itself winds like the course of a wide stream, vanishing in the distance amid interminable ranges of shapely blue hills.

About 100 B.C. Matale was one of the royal residences of King Walagam-bahu, who lived in stormy times, his country being invaded by great armies from Malabar. The king was driven from his throne, and, like our own Prince Charlie, he wandered about, finding concealment in rocky caves known only to the natives. When, after fifteen years, he was re-

stored to the throne, he remembered the caves which had given him sanctuary, and elaborated many of them into rock temples, in one of which, by his command, a company of Buddhist priests and scribes assembled, and committed to writing on palm-leaves, and in the Pali language, the Scriptures, which till then had been preserved by tradition only.

The cave of so great literary interest is the Alu-Vihara, rather more than two miles from Matale. We visited it after breakfast, and found it, like nearly all the so-called cave-temples in Ceylon, to be by no means what we understand by a cave, but merely a series of recesses among huge fragments of fallen crag and gigantic weather-worn boulders of dark gneiss, some of which form overhanging canopies, so leaving partial caves. These are artificially walled up in front, and a thatched or tiled verandah is added in front, while the inside is furnished with divers images, and the rock-walls are frequently decorated with gaudy frescoes of mythological scenes. Some of these are wiharas, or temples, others pansalas, or priests' cells.

We ascended by steep stairs, hewn in the rock, to visit some little relic-shrines; but the powerful smell of multitudes of small bats, which cluster among these rocks, was sickening. Their presence, however, is useful, as the dark-brown soil is greatly valued as manure, and the natives even obtain nitre with which to make gunpowder by boiling and filtering this dust.

Thence we drove on, up hill and down dale, passing various finely shaped hills, especially Aran-galla, which formed a noble background for an interesting ruined Hindoo temple (Gedigé) near Nalande, where we spent the first night. There was the usual gathering of village head-men and other picturesque natives to receive the Governor; and

the approach to the rest-house, which is very prettily situated among dark trees, was beautifully decorated with a most graceful pandal (the great honorific arch), and a long line of low arches, fringed with foliage. The house was all decorated with calico and flowers; while a group of *cadjan*—*i.e.*, plaited palm-leaf huts—had been erected for the gentlemen. The wind, however, was so wild as effectually to murder sleep: so we were all rather tired for next morning's early start *en route* to Dambulla (hitherto called Dambool), where we spent the day and night, to allow time for seeing the most remarkable group of rock-caves in Ceylon.

The road was very beautiful, partly a steep descent between rocky mountains, and overshadowed by great trees. On our way we crossed the dry beds of several streams—the Mirisgoni-oya, the Dambulu-oya, the Malwatta-oya, and the Nalanda-oya, which are typical Ceylonese rivers. For nine months of the year they are at best feeble rills, trickling through an expanse of dry sand, but in the rain torrents of the N.E. monsoon in November and December the rivers are in flood, pouring down from the hills in raging torrents, and impassable for days together. Strange to say, the system adopted in opening up this country was to make excellent roads first, and leave the bridges to be constructed by the next generation; whereas it certainly seems as if the bridges were the primary necessity. These have now been supplied, and fine iron lattice bridges now allow of secure travel at all seasons.

The banks of some of these streams are suggestive of coarse basket-work, so close is the network of interlacing roots of great trees. One which is conspicuous is the kabuk tree, which is very large, and seems not to mind drought—in fact, the natives say it attracts a reservoir for its own use,

and they can always find water near its roots. The red timber is prized as being very durable, so the tree is valuable in all its stages.

Though the road from Matale seems to wind as much up hill as down, we were steadily losing level, Dambulla being only 533 feet above the sea. Here from a level plain rises a solitary huge mass of bare dark-red gneiss rock, about 500 feet in height and 2000 in length. It is certainly more curious than beautiful, and the sketch with which I beguiled the heat of the noontide was largely indebted to its foreground of luxuriant palmated cacti with yellow blossoms. The great tree-cactus, with arms like a gigantic candelabra, also flourishes in this hot district, a very weird-looking plant. I might have included a white ant's castle, as these are numerous and conspicuous objects.

A few human beings, looking like moving mites on the summit, gave me a good idea of the great size of this smooth rounded mountain of rock, chief among many which tower like dark-reddish islands from the green levels of rice or jungle, forming a very remarkable geological feature of this part of Ceylon. One of just the same character and apparent height as this towers above Kurunegalla, and, in common with most of these, is crowned by a venerated temple and great relic-shrines: some, as at Dambulla, have caves in ledges near the summit, which have been fashioned into temples, and curious weather-worn pot-holes are supposed to have been the baths of sundry kings and saints.

In the afternoon we started by a jungle path to the base of the rock, and then passing the pansala or monk's cell, began the steep ascent by a path across the bare rock, which, however, gives a firm foothold, and at last landed us on the platform of arid rock in front of the temples, where, strange

to say, a large bo-tree and a few cocoa-palms contrive to subsist. Of course some of the yellow-robed fraternity were waiting to do the honours, their colouring and gracefully worn drapery being specially harmonious with the surroundings of dark rock.

Though I had begun to realise that memories of India must really not be allowed to force themselves into comparison with scenes in Ceylon, the mention of famous rock temples insensibly suggested thoughts of Elephanta and Ellora, with the inevitable result of a feeling of disappointment at the roughness of detail, and general jar to one's sense of artistic beauty. But once comparisons are dismissed, one realises how strange are the succession of pictures presented by these five caves, each full of idols, dimly seen by the subdued light.

The first cave is the Maha Dewa Dewale — *i.e.*, "the Temple of the Great God," a name familiar in Hindoo cities as that of Siva, but which here is applied to Vishnu, whose wooden image is here present, and so greatly venerated that ordeal by oath is still practised in its presence. So was ordeal by boiling-oil, which happily is now illegal. It stands facing a gigantic recumbent figure of Buddha in the sleep of Nirvana, lying on one side, with the head resting on the hand, and sacred lotus-blossoms engraven on the soles of the feet. At the feet stands a wooden statue of a disciple watching his master's long sleep, and several small images of Buddha. The great one is 47 feet in length, and is said by the priests to be sawn from the solid rock, which in this case seems impossible, unless the whole cave were artificial, of which there is no trace.

The adornment of this cave is attributed to King Walagam Bahu, about 80 B.C., after he had conquered the Malabar

invaders, so it is singular that such a devout Buddhist should have dedicated his work to Vishnu. The finely sculptured stone doorway is decorated with many figures, and two guardians canopied by the seven-headed cobra.

In the next cavern—the Maha-raja-Wihare, "the temple of the Great King"—there is a large statue of the king himself. This cave is simply a gallery about 170 feet long by 70 feet wide, and 22 feet in height at the outer edge; but this curves backward so that the back is barely 4 feet high. In this dark cool chamber are grouped about forty-eight images of Buddha, most of them larger than life: there is something rather impressive about this great company of idols dimly seen through the subdued light, and seated around a relic-shrine. Some are canopied by the seven-headed cobra. There are also images of the Hindoo gods Vishnu, Mata, and Saman, and the goddess Patiné (who has to be propitiated in times of smallpox).

Here, too, is a large wooden image of King Kirti Sri Nissanga, who about A.D. 1193 restored the temple, which had been sacrilegiously injured by Malabar invaders. He had all the statues regilded, and the walls gaudily painted with such a predominance of yellow, that the cave was then named Rangiri, the golden rock.

On the roof and sides of the rock are painted curious frescoes in the crudest colours, which are periodically renewed, in which all manner of subjects are oddly blended—Hindoo divinities, Buddha and his disciples represented as of divers nations and colours, and crowned with aureoles, that of Buddha himself having semicircles of sacred geese and other sacred emblems. A tiny image of Buddha is shown kneeling at the feet of his predecessor, praying that he may attain to Buddhahood.

There are also historical scenes, such as the famous duel, fought B.C. 164, between the Singhalese Prinee Dutugemunu and the Malabar usurper Elala, a prince of Mysore, each mounted on a great elephant. They met in single contest in presence of their armies, outside the walls of Anuradhapura. After a desperate combat Elala was slain, and Dutugemunu was proclaimed king. As a pious Buddhist, he devoted the rest of his days to all possible acts of atonement for the blood he had shed in war. With chivalrous honour he erected a monument to Elala, and enacted that thenceforth, as proeessions passed the tomb, musie must cease, and even kings must alight from their palanquins. So firmly was this custom rooted, that when, nineteen hundred years later, in 1816, the Kandyan leader of an unsuccessful insurrection was making his eseape *viâ* Anuradhapura, weary and worn, he caused his palanquin-bearers to halt that he might alight, and walk past the venerated monument. The story was told to us, as we stood beside the earthen mound which marks the tomb of Elala.

There are also quaint representations (with figures ludierously out of proportion, and fish larger than the ships, popping up their heads from blue waves) of the first landing (B.C. 543) of the Indian Prinee Wijeyo with his Singhalese followers, illustrating their conquest of the aborigines. But when our kinsman, Campbell of Islay, visited these caves, with a mind imbued with the quaint parallel myths he had traced in so many lands, he deseried many mystic meanings, and found that the priest in charge knew some of them—as, for instanee, when the little daughter of the Yakkas, *alias* demons, *alias* aborigines, stands pleading before the conquering king, who presently is shown holding up two fingers of his left hand to bless her, who has saved his seven hundred

giants in the lotus swamp. Then comes a strange white steed prancing about with the king among a lot of headless black trunks, with heads rolling about all over the place.

"She became a mare," said the priest, "and helped the king to kill the Yakshas, and he married her, and that was the first king of Ceylon." To which Mr Campbell replied: "I know a Gaelic story in which a lady turns herself into a grey mare and helps a man to slay no end of people, and escape, and conquer a kingdom. And is not the story of the Master Maid, in Dasent's translation of Norse tales, founded on the same set of incidents in which a 'grey mare is the better horse'? . . . In Scotland it is the King of Norway and the Princess of Ireland. Here it is the king who comes from the sea and the princess of the demons on shore. . . . But in Barra, Japan, and Ceylon, at three ends of the world, the same myths are fathered on the fathers of the conquering people and on their little demon mothers."[1]

Wijeyo married Kuweni, the princess who had helped him to conquer her own relations, but afterwards he sought to strengthen his position by marrying the daughter of an Indian king, and so dismissed her and her children. Mr Campbell might in this story have found another connecting link between the myths of Scotland and of Ceylon. For, as every good Highlander knows, a red thread bound round any person or object is an effectual safeguard against witchcraft;[2] and here in Ceylon, no sooner had Wijeyo landed with his followers than he was met by a "devo," or god, who blessed them, and tied a thread round the arm of each as a protec-

[1] My Circular Notes, vol. ii. p. 155. By J. F. Campbell. Macmillan.

[2] 'In the Hebrides,' pp. 197, 297. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Published by Chatto & Windus.

tion against sorcery. Hence Wijeyo's deliverance from the sorceries practised by his princess.

Pure water for the service of the temple is provided by a dripping well, whose cool crystal drops fall from a fissure in the roof with ceaseless splash into a small tank on the rock pavement.

The third cave, though only about half the size of the last, contains fifty-four images, including another wooden image of the Rajah Kirti Sri Nissanga, and one of Buddha reclining, thirty feet long.

The fourth and fifth are still smaller, but each contains a considerable assortment of worshipful images, and the last, which is quite modern, contains a Buddha thirty-five feet in length.

On various parts of the rock there are ancient inscriptions, one of which, I was told, records how "the Sovereign Lord of Lanka, Prakrama-Bahu Chakkravarti [*i.e.*, the Lord of the Umbrellas], of the dynasty of Kaalinga, the Heroic and Invincible Royal Warrior [who reigned from A.D. 1153 to 1186], enriched the inhabitants, who had become impoverished by inordinate taxes. To this end he relinquished his revenues for five years, bestowed on the people gifts of land, cattle, and slaves, together with an annual donation of five times his own weight in gold, silver, and precious stones. He restored roads which had fallen into disuse, rebuilt the temples at Anuradhapura and many other places, and caused seventy-two statues of Buddha[1] in the three postures [recumbent, sitting, and standing] to be placed within these

[1] The erection of seventy-two images and the gilding of the Temple is generally ascribed to Kirti Nissanga, who succeeded to the throne A.D. 1192, and whose image is preserved in two of the caves, but on the Galpota or Stone Book at Pollonarua there is a reference to his having simply re-gilded the images.

rock temples. These images were gilded, and seven lacs of rupees [according to Maver's edition of Johnson's Dictionary, a lac is one hundred thousand] were expended on a magnificent festival to celebrate this event."

In the same inscription the king ordains that, "when permanent grants of land are made to requite meritorious service, such behests shall not be recorded on palm-leaves, which are liable to be destroyed by rats and white ants, but shall be engraven on plates of copper, so as to endure for ages."

Three great dagobas at one time crowned the summit of this huge rock, but they have wholly disappeared. A point of interest, however, is a pool of water very near the summit, which is said never to fail, even when in seasons of drought every water-spring far and near is dried up. A few trees are dotted about the hill-top, affording a grateful shade, and there is a small slope of short sun-scorched grass.

The view from the summit is very fine, overlooking a vast expanse of country—fertile lands pertaining to this temple, a sea of green jungle dotted with bare dark rocks of the same character as Dambulla, great tanks, the gigantic reservoirs constructed in olden days, fine mountain-ranges, and sundry spots whose old historic interest appeals to those versed in the semi-mythical early history of the Isle, in the days of gods and heroes, and in its later wars.

Foremost amongst these is the wellnigh inaccessible rock fortress of Sigiri, clearly seen, although distant about fifteen miles, as it rises almost perpendicularly from the brink of a neglected tank encircled with forest - trees. The lake is beautified by the red and white blossoms of the lotus, but these are guarded by a legion of grim crocodiles. The rock itself is a huge square crag towering 400 feet above the

plain, and is all bare except on the summit, which is crowned with stunted vegetation. It bulges and overhangs so as to have made it exceedingly difficult of access in the first instance.

It is supposed to have been originally fortified by the aborigines (whom the Singhalese always describe as "Yakku" or demons), but the fortifications and other traces of habitation date from about A.D. 478, and are a memorial of King Kaasyapa the parricide, who, having dethroned his father Dhatu Sena, stripped him naked, loaded him with chains, and caused him to be built up in a wall, which was plastered over with clay to hide all trace of this tomb of the living.

Kaasyapa then tried to murder his younger half-brother Mogallana, but failed in the attempt, the latter escaping to India, whence he eventually returned to avenge his father. Meanwhile the parricide, haunted by the remembrance of his crime, sought security by constructing a dwelling or palace on this lonely crag, round the base of which he erected a massive stone rampart, enclosing divers fortifications.

The ascent from the base to the summit is effected by a series of artificially constructed galleries, dependent for their support on a foundation of brickwork built into a groove which had previously been cut spirally round the rock, to a depth of about four inches. On this slender foundation, assisted by every available atom of natural support, was built a platform about six feet wide, edged with a wall about nine feet high, the whole coated with hard polished chunam, once white, but now red from the action of water tinged with iron. The galleries, which are haunted by innumerable bats and swallows, are now in a very ruinous condition, and are connected here and there by rickety bamboo ladders; and the further ascent to the summit by scarcely

perceptible fissures on the face of almost perpendicular rock is a thing to try the nerves of the hardiest cragsman.

The summit is a level of about an acre in extent, and here Kaasyapa's palace must have stood, but of this, little if any trace remains, a thick growth of jungle having taken possession of the ground. Water was supplied by two tanks, one 90 feet square by about 15 feet deep, and the other 15 feet square by 6 feet deep. These were apparently constructed to catch rain-water, but there is also a natural spring near the summit, and the water-supply seems to have been good. Kaasyapa, however, did not stand a siege here. For eighteen years he lived as an ascetic lay devotee, striving to atone for his crimes by showing favour to the priests. Then Mogallana returned from India at the head of an army, and Kaasyapa came forth to give him battle, and was slain by the hand of his own brother.[1]

The fortified palace, constructed with such incredible toil, was thenceforth abandoned to bears and leopards, owls and bats, the people deeming it accursed, and haunted by demons.

The origin of the name Sigiri is disputed, some maintaining that it should be Sikhari, a hill-fort; the general impression, however, being that it is a contraction of Singha-giri, "the Lion's Rock" (like Singa-pore, the Lion's City). Forty years ago an adventurous traveller described the paintings of lions on the white chunam of the great gallery, as white as if it were only a month old, though constructed nearly 1400 years

[1] Probably no other history more fully illustrates how

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown"

than does that of Ceylon; so very many of the kings reigned less than one year ere they were murdered, or else were so weary of their own crimes that they committed suicide. One was murdered on the very day of his accession. One died of strong drink. *Several, who were deposed by usurpers, had their eyes put out.*

ago. It seems probable, however, that that traveller drew on his imagination, as the chunam is now iron-stained, and the only frescoes to be seen are several large human figures, supposed to be of Buddha, in a hollow rock chamber 60 feet above the gallery, with a sheer drop of 160 feet to the base of the crag.

How the artist got there, and how he was supported in his perilous position, were insoluble mysteries till June 1889, when Mr Alick Murray determined to solve the problem. This proved no easy matter. The local chiefs and people absolutely refused to help in any way, having been warned by the Buddhist priests that inevitable destruction awaited any one who should dare to intrude into the demon-guarded chamber.

Nothing daunted, Mr Murray secured the services of some Tamil stone-cutters from Southern India, who bored holes in the rock-face, one above the other, and therein inserted iron jumpers, which were secured with cement, and to these wooden staging was lashed. The man of lightest weight was selected to make the necessary holes, but after a while even he declared that it was impossible for him to ascend any higher, but he added that, if he were allowed to devote three days to fasting and prayer to his gods, he thought he might succeed. This he accordingly did, and effectually overcame that difficulty.

But even when the rock chamber was reached, the slope of the floor was found to be so steep that no one could even sit on it, so there was no rest for the explorers till more iron stanchions were driven in, and a wooden staging prepared, on which was erected a platform, on which (notwithstanding a fierce wind which shook the woodwork in the most alarming manner) Mr Murray spent the livelong day, lying on his back from sunrise till sunset, for a whole week, patiently

tracing the frescoes, which are painted on the roof and round the summit of the cave.

He found that these really represent thirteen female figures (others have been obliterated by time and weather). These are mostly in couples, each showing a very high-caste lady loaded with jewels, but naked to the waist, and attended by a Tamil girl of darker colour, and wearing exactly the same jacket and jewels still worn by girls of the same race. These damsels are offering to their mistresses sacred lotus-blossoms on a tray. The fact of these ladies being nude above the waist points to their being natives of the Malabar coast, where one race (the Nairs, I think) have adopted this singular badge of nobility, and their high-caste women will on no account cover their shoulders. So it would appear that a Singhalese king married a few Nair princesses.

It was strange to be thus suddenly brought face to face with the work of an artist of fourteen hundred years ago, the colouring almost as fresh as when first laid on, and with a singular predominance of green, a colour now rarely used by native artists. Here and there pieces of plaster had fallen off, showing how the rock had been prepared by being chiselled to a smooth surface, and then coated with two layers of fine clay, the under layer being mixed with rice husk, the upper layer very smooth.

All the time Mr Murray was at work, a number of most interested spectators, including a few village head-men and Buddhist priests, watched at the foot of the rock, expecting to witness some awful catastrophe, when the vengeful demons asserted themselves. On the third day curiosity overcame prudence, and a minor chief asked Mr Murray whether he would protect him if he ventured to ascend to the demon-haunted chamber. He was so amazed and delighted with all

he saw, that on his safe return to earth a young Buddhist monk found courage to follow, on Mr Murray's assuring him that it was really quite safe; and so, gathering up his yellow robes, he cautiously ascended the first bamboo ladder, when a shout of warning from friends below made him hesitate, and again appeal to Mr Murray to know whether he might really venture to beard the demons in their cave. On a renewed assurance of safety from supernatural foes, he clambered up, his countenance betraying how sore had been his mental struggle. Then came the physical anguish of the descent: however, that likewise was accomplished in safety; and when the week was ended, and all the tracings successfully secured, the many prophets of evil were all compelled to admit that the demons must have taken flight.

A point of some interest connected with Dambulla is, that the last insurrection against British rule broke out at this place in 1848. It was a small affair, stirred up by a few Kandyan chiefs and Buddhist priests, and was chiefly remarkable as showing how very little influence the latter possessed over the people, when not supported by the ruling power. Though the insurgents numbered about four thousand, they were quickly quelled by the Ceylon Rifles and part of the 15th Regiment, who attacked them first at Matale and afterwards at Kurunegalla, in each case routing them effectually. A few necessary executions followed, including that of a Buddhist priest, who was shot in his robes, greatly to the disgust of some Europeans. His own brethren, however, acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and voluntarily declared that they did not consider the fact of his being shot in his robes as any indignity to their order. We saw one of the chiefs who had been concerned in this last struggle against foreign rule—a very fine old man.

About sunset we returned to the rest-house, whence in the evening we witnessed a pretty show of native fireworks, and the burning of orange and blue lights in cocoa-nut shells, both on the top of the rock and in the rest-house.

Early the next morning we drove ten miles to Ellagamuwa, where, as usual, crowds of people had come some way to meet the Governor, making the most appalling noise of tom-tom-beating and other evidences of rejoicing. There were the usual temporary huts hung with calico, and very ornamental pandals (the arches of welcome). The view from here of the blue Rita-gala hills is very beautiful, though the foreground of dead-level paddy-fields laid out in small squares like a chess-board is not attractive.

Though I speak of blue hills, Rita-gala is in fact an isolated mountain-spur rising to a height of 2506 feet, and specially interesting as having been the last refuge of the "Yakkos" or aboriginal inhabitants of the Isle, when invaded by the conquering Singhalese; consequently many legends attach to certain very ancient ruins on the mountain. It is further interesting as being the northernmost mountain of any importance in the Isle. Beyond its base commences the great level extending over the northern half of Ceylon. We were told that the view from the summit is very fine, and it is spoken of as a desirable situation as a sanitarium.

About five miles to the west of Ellagamuwa lies the Kala-balalu-wewa, or Kala-wewa, *alias* Kala-wapi, which is the second largest of the great tanks, or rather artificial lakes, of Ceylon, being thirty-two miles in circumference, and formed by means of an embankment of earth and huge blocks of stone, the whole about sixty feet in height and twenty feet wide at the top. Tennant said this was twelve miles long, but more recent measurement says six miles,

natural high ground doing the rest. The spill-water, all of hewn granite, measures 260 feet in length, 200 feet in width, and is about 40 feet high.

It was originally two distinct tanks, the Kala-wewa and the Balalu-wewa, fed by different streams, the Dambulla-oya, the Hawanweli-oya, and the Mirisgoni-oya. But the waters of the great twin lakes contrived to effect a meeting, and now the great united lake is known as the Kala-wewa, and the united waters of the three rivers flow on as the Kala-oya, which enters the sea near Puttalam.

These grand reservoirs, in which was stored water for the irrigation of the whole Province, were constructed about the year A.D. 460 by King Dhatu-Sena, who was so horribly murdered by his own son. On pretext of pointing out where his treasures were concealed, the captive monarch was permitted to revisit it, and was sent thither in a shabby cart with broken wheels, the driver of which, for very pity, shared his meal of parched rice with the king.

On reaching the tank, he bathed in the beautiful lake he had made for the good of his people, and having drunk of its waters, and having conversed with his friend, the priest Mahanamo, he declared that this friend and the great lake were the only treasures he possessed, and so was carried back to Anuradhapura to meet his awful doom. In recording this incident, Mahanamo, the priest, remarks that this living entombment of the king was the just retribution for his own impiety, in that, while making the embankment of the great tank, he therein buried a priest, who was so deeply absorbed in meditation that he could not be aroused; so the earth was heaped upon him, and he perished.

Of all the wonderful traces which remain in Ceylon of the work of the mighty Singhalese kings, none are more impres-

sive than those of the great artificial lakes, and of the canals by which water was carried thence to innumerable village tanks, and distributed according to the need of each separate field. The perfection of the whole system of irrigation designed and carried out by the hydraulic engineers of those ancient days could scarcely be surpassed, and the ingenuity and skill whereby the heavy rainfall of certain seasons was secured, and the precious water treasured to save the thirsting land in times of drought. And water is doubly precious under a burning tropical sun, having apparently the same fertilising influence that the richest manures could have in colder lands.

In all parts of the Island, in wildest solitudes and most unhealthy jungles (where stagnant swamps and dense forests now cover the plains, once fertile and rich with waving rice-fields), these ruined tanks are found, of all sizes, from the small village tank to the great artificial lake. These last were formed by erecting a vast embankment of huge blocks of stone, strongly cemented, and covered with turf—a mighty barrier of solid masonry—perhaps a hundred feet wide at the base, narrowing to forty feet at the top, and furnished with mighty sluices to regulate the escape of the water.

And then, when one of these large-minded kings took to this sort of work, it was done in such a wholesale fashion, several of these great tanks being perhaps constructed simultaneously in remote districts. Thus King Maha-Sen, who about A.D. 275 constructed the beautiful artificial Lake of Minery near Polonarua, which is twenty miles in circumference, also constructed sixteen large tanks, including Kanthalay, near Trincomalee.

The gigantic tank of Padivil in the Northern Province (which is marked on some maps as Vavuniya-vilan-kulam),

has also been attributed to him; but an inscription on the sacred rock at Mehintale records that this great lake was Temple property at an earlier date. It must have been by far the largest of all these ancient lakes, having an area of fifteen miles: its dam is eleven miles long, 200 feet wide at the bottom, 30 feet wide at the top, some parts being 70 feet high, and the whole is faced by steps of large squared stones, many of them 12 feet in length. Many great stone blocks are finely sculptured.[1]

Due west from Padivil, on the coast of Manaar, are the stupendous ruins of the Giant's Tank, which (like Padivil) was designed on a magnificent scale for the irrigation of that vast district known as "The Wanny," now chiefly arid jungle, but capable of being so fertile were irrigation possible. At present such land as is cultivated only returns about one crop in three years. With full irrigation it would give two crops annually. The embankment of this "Giant's Tank" is 300 feet wide at the base, and can be traced for fifteen miles. A causeway of hewn granite, 15 feet high and 750 feet in length, was to have connected the river with the feeding canal. Enormous labour must have been expended on the whole, and the result should have been the formation

[1] Sir James Emerson Tennant states (vol. ii. pp. 501-508) that although it was the dry season when he visited the Padivil-kulam, the water still covered an area of ten miles in diameter, and the stream issuing from it by the great breach in the embankment was about 300 feet broad, and so impetuous that the horses had difficulty in crossing it.

Sir James gives a most fascinating description of the many thousands of water-birds which he, arriving long before dawn, saw nesting on trees or among the swampy sedges of this utter solitude,—tall flamingoes, herons, egrets, storks, ibises, and many more, as also a vast colony of pelicans, who had built their heavy nests, each containing three eggs, in the tops of tall trees. When the sun rose, all the birds soared slowly away to the sea-shore, distant about twenty miles, there to seek their breakfast. The lake was swarming with crocodiles hungrily watching for the fall of young birds.

of a lake as large as Geneva. But by some lamentable miscalculation of levels, the great canal by which the waters of the Malwatte river were to have been led into the lake carried them back to the channel of the river, and all the toil and expenditure were proved to have been in vain.

So the people returned to live as best they could on the arid land, and in A.D. 1791 the Dutch found no less than twenty-four villages in the area of what should have been the lake. Strange to say, the native records which so minutely detail all that was deemed creditable in the acts of the kings, make no mention whatever of this great abortive effort. Tradition ascribes it to a nameless king of the fourteenth century, who, with the best possible intentions, strove to emulate the good deeds of his predecessors. But in that short lapse of time the hydraulic engineers had lost their cunning, and so all alike reaped the meed of failure in mortification and oblivion.

About the centre of the Isle, and due east from Kalawewa, lies Lake Minery, which was formed by diverting the waters of the Kara-ganga, or, as it is now called, the Ambanganga, by means of a dam twenty-four miles in length, ranging in height from 40 to 90 feet, and averaging 80 feet for many miles. This dam was repaired about the year A.D. 1153 by King Prakrama Bahu I., who thus formed a series of lagoons navigable by boats, which are supposed to have been the celebrated "Seas of Prakrama," though that name may have been applied to the multitude of tanks which he created, and of canals by which rivers were diverted to these great reservoirs. He is said to have constructed 1407 tanks, besides 100 for the exclusive use of the priests, and to have restored 1395! That, of course, involves connecting canals and much other work.

Some of these must have been exceedingly ancient, the earliest of which we have any certain information being the Bassawa-kulam at Anuradhapura, which is supposed to have been constructed about B.C. 500 by King Panduwasa, and was restored in 1867. Probably next to this ranks the Tissawewa tank, near Kattregam, in the Southern Province, a great lake covering an area of about 3000 acres, made about B.C. 307 by King Deveni-pia-tissa, and restored in 1876.

The account of King Prakrama's enormous energy in regard to these irrigation works, as also in the matter of building temples and palaces, would be quite bewildering but for the knowledge that these autocratic kings had the right and power to claim from all their subjects a very large amount of free labour, or as it was called, "Rajah-karia," "King's service," —a system which, of course, was often very gravely abused, but which, when applied to work for the common weal, such as this storing and distributing of precious water, had certainly great advantages in a country where the cares of agriculture do not claim more than half a man's working days.

Its necessity was proven by the fact that so soon as the strong controlling hand was removed, these great works, which were for the good of all, were grievously neglected. Probably the mischief began long ago, when, owing to wars and other political causes, the seat of Government was so frequently moved from place to place; and though the villagers must have remained to profit by the blessed waters, attention to keeping the tanks in repair was doubtless relaxed, and so "little leaks" were established, and sluices got out of order, and general efficiency was impaired.

But it is certain that the reign of ruin set in in earnest when the disorganising presence of Europeans became permanent, and the finishing stroke was given in 1832, when

(too hastily and without fully understanding the character of the people, and the need of exercising a certain amount of control for their own good) the British Government proclaimed absolute freedom, and the total abolition of Rajah-karia.

In this proclamation of freedom exception was made for the very large[1] lands belonging to Buddhist and Hindoo temples, where the people continued in absolute serfdom to the priests, holding their lands on the condition of cultivating those of the temples, and of rendering all manner of other service, which included taking part in idolatrous ceremonies, in some cases against the bidding of an awakening conscience. Better would it have been for the

[1] In Mr Mitford's report for Sir Hercules Robinson, on the existing state of serfdom on Temple lands in 1868, he says:—

"The Order in Council by which in 1832 compulsory labour was abolished in Crown villages, *by excepting royal temple and private villages from its advantages, is now the strongest ground on which the existing state of servitude is built.* Here is a great wrong legalised. We found the despotic principles in existence, and superadded British forms, and THUS RIVETED THE CHAINS OF THIS GALLING TYRANNY ON ONE-THIRD OF THE POPULATION.

"Under this system men are bought and sold with the land, agriculture and industry are checked, oppression is legalised, and Christianity prohibited. The exaction of services is arbitrary. I have known instances of men working for three months in the year, and others even for six months, during which time their own lands were lying waste. Besides agricultural and menial tasks, each landholder's family was allotted a portion of the temple service, such as repairing the temples and idols, carrying the images at festivals, furnishing musicians, devil-dancers, &c. If a temple serf should become a Christian, he could not, of course, perform any of these services in a heathen temple, consequently he would lose his land.

"*I maintain that we have no right to hold any British subject in a position compelling him to perform idolatrous ceremonies, with the alternative of ruin. . . . I have often felt a blush of shame when obliged to decide cases against temple serfs, in violation of the rights of humanity and the first principles of justice.*"

people had this exemption been reversed, and the only compulsory work retained in some modified form been that for the upkeep of roads and irrigation.

I have already shown (p. 90) that in 1870 an Act was passed to enable temple serfs (in other words, the tenants of temple lands) to pay an equivalent in money in lieu of rendering these services,—an Act which, however, from various causes, has not yet wrought the expected deliverance. For one thing, the exemption of these lands from paying grain-tax renders them peculiarly desirable holdings, so that most tenants fear to take any step which would risk the loss of their tenure.

As regards the roads, it was after a while found necessary for their maintenance to require every man between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five to work thereon for six consecutive days annually, or as an equivalent, to pay a sum of about two rupees.

Then when the salvation of the country was found to depend on the restoration of the ancient irrigation works, it was found positively necessary so far to revive the old system that the men of each village have been obliged to help in the reconstruction of their own particular tank, and are bound to take their annual share in its repair, in proportion to the number of acres for which each requires irrigation. Moreover, though paid labour was employed for the restoration of the great Kala-wewa and its canal, the landowners who profit thereby are now each required to give about fourteen days' work annually to keeping the whole in repair. Of course, the re-imposition of even this shadow of the old law, which had been so rashly abolished, has called forth a certain amount of grumbling from the men whose very lives and those of their families have thereby been saved.

The immediate result of the abolition of compulsory "service for the king" was the destruction at one blow of the whole machinery by which great national works were kept up by the native rulers, for when every man suddenly found himself absolutely free from all necessity of taking any share in keeping up public works, although a few individuals might do their part, the necessary combination became impracticable, and tanks and watercourses very soon fell into ruin, the perpetually recurring monsoon floods soon converting small fissures into extensive breaches: thus the precious waters all ran to waste. There was no reserve for seasons of drought, and the cultivation of rice was impossible. The tanks themselves and the adjacent lands became unhealthy swamps, breeding poisonous miasma; and the ever-increasing unhealthiness of the districts under these conditions compelled the villagers to disperse, and to make a scanty living by the cultivation of such unwholesome grain as can be grown on very dry soil—chiefly millet (*Panicum miliacæum*) and Kurukkan (*Eleusine indica*). The latter bears a seed something like clover, and the meal prepared from it makes tolerable porridge; but the natives use it chiefly in the form of most indigestible cakes, as tough as leather. Pulse and kollu are also grains which grow on dry soil, as also does gingelly, an oil-giving grain—which, however, flourishes only on newly cleared forest-land, and speedily exhausts the soil.

As to water, which is the only drink in the interior of the Isle where cocoa-palms do not grow, the people were (and are still in some districts) occasionally reduced to drinking mud from little pools in which the buffaloes have wallowed. Sir John Douglas mentions that, having to halt at one of these villages in the hottest season, he asked for a bath and

the people laughed at the very idea. They told him he could get some water if he sent six miles to fetch it. This he did, and longed for the return of his water-carriers; but when at last they arrived the water they brought was so foul, and smelt so bad, that, after filtering it six times through towels, he could not bring himself to wash in it, and so sacrificed three bottles of soda-water, and therein luxuriated, only wishing there were more of it!

Unfortunately, poor Singhalese villagers cannot indulge in soda-water baths, and their consequent state of unavoidable filth (in these jungle villages in the dry season), combined with bad air to breathe, bad water to drink, and unwholesome and insufficient food, produces a condition of utter debility, resulting too often in the frightful disease of parangi, resembling leprosy—loathsome to behold, and most terrible to the sufferer. In some districts the population has been literally decimated by this scourge.

In the almost abandoned tank districts, luxuriant jungle rapidly overspread the rich rice-fields, while the shallow waters became the favourite haunt of all manner of wild-fowl. Here troops of elephants and great herds of wild buffaloes, deer, pigs, and other animals, came to drink in the cool of the day. Grim crocodiles lay basking on the shore; monkeys of all sizes chattered and screamed among the branches, and the jackals lent their music to the chorus. Peacocks and golden orioles flashed in the sunlight; great pelicans, tall white cranes, and pink flamingoes stalked along among the sedgy shallows. In short, these ruined tanks were each centres of attraction to sportsmen and naturalists.

I rejoice to speak of all this in the past tense, because, although very much remains to be done, so much has been

effected, in the way of restoration, in the last fifteen years. About thirty years ago Sir Henry Ward strongly urged the British Government to take the matter in hand, and a commencement was made by restoring some tanks in the Batticaloa country, in the heart of a settled population, by whom their inestimable value was at once recognised.

Sir Hercules Robinson carried on the good work, and secured an enactment for the annual expenditure of £20,000 by Government on irrigation work, to be repaid by the cultivators by payment of a water-rate. Kanthalai, near Trincomalee, and Tissa-Maharama, in the Southern Province —capable respectively of irrigating 10,000 and 15,000 acres —were next restored. These, till recently, were deemed failures, because the disheartened villagers could not shake off their apathy and return to the cultivation of abandoned lands. So those who grumbled at what seemed unremunerative outlay deemed their prophecies of ill omen all fulfilled. Happily these proved to be only deferred successes, for each of these great tanks now irrigates a vast tract of luxuriant rice-land.

In 1867 Government called for a return of all the tanks in Ceylon, and obtained a list of 4903, many of which, of course, were small village tanks, and the majority quite out of repair. The report for the North Central Province in 1871 stated that out of 1600 village tanks not a single one had sluices, or was capable of containing water to any extent. This was on the vast plain of Nuwara-Kalawiya, around Anuradhapura, once so fertile as to have been known as the granary of Ceylon, but where at that time rice (which to the Singhalese is the equivalent of beef, mutton, and potatoes) was simply not to be obtained.

When in the following year Sir William Gregory first

visited this once luxuriant district, and saw for himself the pitiful condition of the people, few in number, dirty, diseased, and apathetic from semi-starvation, having apparently lost all heart and hope, with characteristic energy he resolved that their case must be taken up in real earnest. At that time the North Central Province was little visited by Europeans, the roads being mere tracks, and all the streams unbridged. It was sixteen years since any Governor had made his way thither.

To secure a larger share of attention and care, Sir William separated this great district from the Northern Province, and formed it into the new North Central Province. (In like manner, a few years later, Sir Arthur Gordon divided the Southern Province, creating the new provinces of Sabaragamua and Uva, that those neglected regions might receive a due share of recognition.)

In commencing work on Nuwara-Kalawiya, it was evident to Sir William that the first necessity was to reconstruct the village tanks, and this could only be done by the work of the villagers themselves, every man on the earthworks of his own village tank. By the agency of the village councils this was effected, each man being required to work without remuneration for thirty days per annum, until the particular tank with which he is connected is completed, Government undertaking to provide and construct free of cost to the village the ironwork and masonry required for the sluice and waste-weir. By the close of 1882 Mr Fisher reported that, as the result of nine years of the villagers' earthwork, 199 tanks had been restored, and that Government had supplied 206 sluices. In May 1884 Sir William Gregory was able to state at the Royal Colonial Institute in London that, out of the total of 1600 tanks, 1200 were either repaired or in process

of being so, a large number being already in such thorough working order that when Sir William returned to revisit Ceylon, he had the joy of beholding near every village a wide tract of well-cultivated and luxuriant crops, and of knowing that the people had home-grown rice in such abundance as to be far beyond their own powers of consumption; paddy—*i.e.*, rice in the husk—actually selling at 5d. per bushel, whereas in Colombo, where the cost of freight has to be added, its price ranges from 1s. 8d. to 2s. per bushel. But the most surprising and delightful change was that of the people themselves. All the hopelessness had vanished, the skinny half-starved children were fat and healthy, the horrible parangi had almost disappeared, and the population was increased by the return of many, anxious to share the blessings of abundant cheap food and comparatively good water.

But all these village tanks were dependent for their supply on the rains, consequently in times of prolonged drought they must inevitably fail. It was therefore a matter of the gravest importance to secure a supply as nearly permanent as it is possible for any such to be in the tropics; and when Sir Arthur Hamilton-Gordon succeeded to the office of Governor, he was deeply impressed with the absolute necessity of yet more extended and systematic action in restoring the full irrigation system of the old rulers.

The primary necessity was the restoration of the great Kala-wewa, and of the Yódi Ela or Giant's Canal, which is 53 miles in length and 40 feet wide, and by means of which water was carried from the great reservoir of Kala-wewa to eighty village tanks along its course, and ultimately to many more, and so flowed on to Anuradhapura, the ancient capital, where it supplied the three great tanks of Tissa-wewa,

Bassawa-kulam, and Bulan-kulam. A second great canal carried water from the Balalu-wewa to the north-west.

At that time the beds of the great lakes, and of the canals, were, in common with all the surrounding country, overgrown with the densest forest of large trees, with such thick undergrowth that in many places a horse could not pass through it, and the only way in which it was possible to get an idea of the country was by climbing to a sort of "crow's nest" built in the top of a very tall tree. Of water there was no trace.

The first thing to be done was to fell and burn all this dense jungle, and then it became possible to see exactly what was necessary. It was estimated that the cost of restoration would amount to about 550,000 rupees. In point of fact the work was done for 510,000 rupees, and the sum originally named covered the cost of making necessary roads and other items.

As a matter of course, the mere suggestion of such an expenditure on a sparsely peopled arid jungle, at a time when the colony was in pecuniary difficulties, aroused strenuous opposition, to which Sir Arthur turned a deaf ear, taking for his motto the old English proverb, "It's dogged as does it"; and so through all the storm of criticism he carried the work steadily on, having good proof of how certainly irrigation affected both agriculture and sanitation, and how much it had already accomplished in raising the people from a state of misery and degradation.

Mr Ievers, the acting Government agent, and Mr Wrightson, the engineer, worked heart and soul, the latter never leaving his post for four years, notwithstanding repeated attacks of malignant fever. All that time there was an average of six hundred men employed on the tank and

canal works. The breaches were repaired; a new spill-wall of solid granite and real English Portland cement, and various regulating sluices, were constructed at the great lake and on the canal.

Their work was not all plain sailing. In 1884 the drought was so intense, that the officer in charge of the irrigation works was obliged to suspend all operations except those of surveying and collecting materials for future masonry work. No water could be obtained for miles round, so it was impossible to assemble large bodies of men. Even for small working parties, drinking-water had to be carried several miles. The ground was so thoroughly baked that it was like sun-dried bricks, and no "mamotie" could make any impression upon it.

In the following year the difficulties were all the other way. Heavy floods seriously endangered the half-finished earthworks, and one breach in the embankment was so quickly enlarged by the sudden breaking of the coffer-dams, that one of the working elephants and his care-taker were swept away by the mighty rush of waters, and it was feared that both were lost. Happily, after a breathless interval, the great creature's legs appeared three or four hundred yards lower down, and presently it contrived to get its head above water, when, to the amazement of all, the driver was seen clinging to the neck of the elephant, which eventually swam safely ashore.

On February 22, 1888, Sir Arthur had the happiness of formally opening the effectually restored works.

That was a scene much to be remembered by all who took part in it. Close to the embankment of the clear blue lake was a camp of over fifty white tents and temporary huts, about twelve feet square, as sleeping-quarters, besides large

dining and refreshment rooms, and reception rooms. These were all built of green boughs, thatched with straw, and lined with white calico hangings. This was the European camp. There was also a grand durbar - hall, somewhat apart, which, though only temporary, was a really handsome building, with open sides, and pillars supporting a double roof, the whole most gaily decorated with brightly coloured draperies, mats, and graceful treasures of the forest, with a raised and carpeted dais for the Governor. At night this was transformed into a fine dining-hall, lighted by many Japanese lanterns—a most fairy-like scene, to have sprung up in the heart of the desert jungle.

There was also abundant accommodation for natives, of whom about three thousand assembled from far and near for this great occasion of rejoicing, not only on account of the restoration of the tank, but as a special celebration of the Queen's Jubilee. All provision of "good entertainment for man and beast" was made on the most liberal scale, and perfect weather added all that was desired to this gigantic picnic. (One luxurious detail in the caterer's provision list was ten cwt. of ice, brought from Colombo in perfect condition!)

Of course there was a profusion of native decoration, one conspicuous inscription being, "Hail Sir Arthur Gordon, G.C.M.G., the Restorer of Dhatu-Sen's Great Tank, the Kala-wewa." The same recognition was gracefully expressed in the address of the Singhalese head-men, who prophesied that "the great tank of Kala-wewa and its magnificent canal will in the distant future carry the name of Arthur Gordon down the river of Time, along with those of Sri Raja Dhatu-Sen and Prakrama Bahu the Great."

The members of the great picnic had assembled in the

previous week, the Governor's party arriving on Monday. On the following afternoon there was a most picturesque reception of all the native chiefs and head-men in the fine durbar-hall, and at sunset the foundation-stone of a commemorative monument was laid by the Governor in the name of the Most Holy Trinity.

The Buddhist priests, however, had previously had their full share in the ceremonial, in the manner most calculated to impress the native mind, a group of about forty priests being assembled in the durbar-hall to open proceedings by a special chant of welcome to the Governor. Their yellow robes, and the gorgeous dresses of the Kandyan chiefs and the more statuesque village head-men, mingling with other very varied costumes, combined to make an altogether unique scene in that long-desolate region, as they stood on the banks of the blue lake in the golden light of the setting sun, which glorified the great sea of forest, and the beautiful distant Matale hills.

Then a great procession was formed of all Government officials, gorgeous chiefs and richly caparisoned elephants, torch-bearers, devil-dancers, men dressed as dancing-girls, noisy musicians, and natives of every degree. The aforesaid elephants had earned a good right to take part in the procession, having by their strength and sagacity lent valuable aid to the workers. The great embankment was illuminated by long lines of fairy lights; then followed much feasting of tired and hungry people, with fires blazing in every direction, and all the picturesque details of a jungle camp; and finally, the memorable day ended with displays by wonderfully apparelled Singhalese dancers and Tamil actors. Conspicuous amongst the latter was a company who had come from Jaffna in the far north of the Isle, and who performed

a pathetic Sanscrit drama called Arichandra (the Martyr for Truth), showing how an ancient Indian king had sold his wife, his only son, and finally himself, to a man of the lowest caste, rather than tell a lie. That certainly must have occurred in pre-historic times, judging by the prevalence of unblushing perjury in the present day!

There was also a very successful display of fireworks, which were let off from the end of the bund, blending with the silvery moonlight which illumined the twin lakes and the surrounding forests, all combining to form a lovely scene.

At the same time that this grand work was being accomplished, smaller details in the great irrigation scheme were being vigorously pushed on, and no less than two hundred village tanks in the North-Western and North Central Provinces were restored and provided with sluices in the course of 1887-88. Thus it is hoped that new life will be restored to one district after another, till the whole land "shall stand so thick with corn that it shall laugh and sing." With much practice the work of tank restoration has become very much simpler and cheaper than it was when first tried, one very important reduction being due to the invention by Mr A. Murray, Provincial Engineer, of how to make sluice pipes of concrete or baked clay, instead of the expensive iron sluices which were used at first. Thus in the year 1890 alone, 300 tanks were restored, and 500 sluices were provided at a very much lower figure than half that number would have cost fifteen years ago.

In the report of the Central Irrigation Board, it is stated that between the years 1850 and 1889 there have been restored 59 large tanks and 2250 small ones. Two hundred and forty-five anicuts have been constructed, and 326 irriga-

tion channels have been constructed or repaired, making a total length of 699 miles.

Within the three years immediately following its completion, Kala-wewa fully justified its restoration. For five successive seasons were the fields so abundantly irrigated that heavy crops were reaped twice a-year, in striking contrast with the fields belonging to villages dependent on rainfall, where, in consequence of an insufficient water-supply, even the "Maha" or great crop was very poor, and cultivation for the "Yala" season was not even attempted.

But as the drought continued during two years, the rivers by which alone Kala-wewa is fed ceased to flow, and in September 1890 the great reservoir was almost dry—only a few shallow pools remained in the bed of the grand lake, and all the lesser tanks were either hard-baked soil, or at best contained a few puddles of black liquid mud which the wretched inhabitants scooped up in gourds—perhaps laboriously collecting about a cupful at a time, as it slowly trickled into exhausted wells. Rice-growing was impossible—the villagers had to return to the cultivation of kurukkan, and very soon the terrible old story was repeated. Foul water to drink and scanty unwholesome food, together with the unavoidable filth of having no water for bathing or for washing clothes, and that in fierce tropical heat, produced a renewed outbreak of the terrible disease parangi, which once again was seen on every side.

Even in view of the good already done, there were not lacking murmurers who could only see in all this a proof that after all the expenditure, the great tank had failed to keep up the water-supply. To these came an answer from one[1] who, when the restoration was under discussion,

[1] The Editor of the 'Ceylon Observer.'

had strongly opposed it, but who confessed that he had been mistaken, and was now convinced of the wisdom of what had been already done, and the incalculable benefits certain to accrue ere long.

He pointed out that when there are two consecutive years without rain, many rivers cease to flow, and that the Matale rivers had actually not run since Kala-wewa was completed. The Malwatu-oya, which is the chief river in the whole of this great district, had, for the second time in the memory of the living, been quite dry, and had never flowed in 1890. Moreover, springs which had never before been known to fail had dried up. Nevertheless, so well had Kala-wewa stored every drop of precious water which reached it (rising from 3 feet to over 15, under the influence of a single rain-storm in which 18 inches of rain fell), that five consecutive harvests had been secured, and that but for these (not to speak of the supply of good water for man and beast) the North Central Province might as well have been at once abandoned to the bears, for its population would have speedily altogether vanished. Could the restoration work be deemed a failure because, in a year of almost unprecedented drought, the feeding rivers had failed to supply it? It had been shown to have a storage capacity sufficient, in a year of good rainfall, for the irrigation of 20,000 acres, or in a year when it was called upon to supplement a deficient rainfall, for 10,000 acres. The object, therefore, to be aimed at was to secure the water of a perennial stream which might keep it full; and this, it is hoped, can be effected without excessive outlay. Moreover, every foot added to the height of the embankment would increase the storage capacity of the lake.

In Mr Ievers' report on the North Central Province in 1890, he states that, but for the restoration of the elaborate

system of irrigation works, enabling the cultivators to utilise the scanty supplies of rain which fell, a grievous famine must have swept away the already meagre population.[1] He says: "In calculating the cost of the restoration works, we must always regard them in the aspect of insurance against famine, and the fatal fever which ever follows in the wake of famine. The question is one of money expenditure, against the extinction of human life, and the reversion of territory into desolation."

Even as I write, news reaches me of the heavy rainfall at Anuradhapura in May 1891—nine inches in a week. The rivers Malwatu-oya and Mirisgoni-oya were overflowing, the waters rising fast in Kala-wewa, Tisa-wewa, and Bassawak-kulam, while several village tanks had burst. The people were rejoicing in the certainty of a magnificent Yala harvest.

Year by year improvements of all sorts are progressing, one item being the planting of many thousands of palms and useful timber-trees all along the course of the great canal. In short, there is every reason to hope that the restoration of the great system of irrigation will do more for Ceylon than even its original construction. What that first change was, we gather from the old chronicle, which tells how, when Wijeho, the Indian conqueror, landed with his followers, the friendly princess fed them with *rice which had been obtained from wrecked ships.* But after the completion of the irrigation works, rice became so abundant, that the large surplus appears to have been exported to the mainland. It was, however, reserved for foreigners[2] to insist on the multiplication of cocoa and palmyra palms, which now form so important a part of the national diet.

The bed of the great lake and the Giant Canal were not the

[1] 70,000 persons. [2] See Chapter xx.

sole traces of ancient days which lay so long hidden in the dense forest. At one end of the embankment stands a dagoba of the usual bell shape, about fifty feet high, said to contain the jawbone of Buddha. (How carelessly he must have been cremated !) Round it are four altars, and near it are the ruins of a preaching-hall and of a monastery, with sculptured stones guarding the entrance. The dagoba is approached by twelve stone steps, on each of which is an inscription now illegible, but said to be in the Nagara character. It is supposed that this great relic-shrine was built of bricks taken from the ancient city wall, when, in the twelfth century, the great king, Prakrama Bahu I., rebuilt the chief monuments in this deserted city.

This place is called Vigitapura, "the town of Vigita" (so named after a relation of King Wijeyo, the leader of the original Singhalese invasion), and dates from about 500 B.C., having been a stronghold and a place of note ere Prince Anuradha had founded the mighty city which bears his name,[1] and which lies at a distance of about thirty-five miles, as the crow flies. This, by the way, is a contested derivation, as it has generally been assumed that the name was

[1] Wijeyo having repudiated his island-wife and her children in favour of an Indian princess (see p. 343), found himself without an heir, the sovereignty devolving on his nephew Panduwaasa, who likewise sought a bride from India. She arrived escorted by six stalwart brothers, who settled in various parts of Ceylon, Vigita and Anuradha founding the cities which bore their names.

It is stated in the Mahāwansa that Anuradhapura was so called on account of its having been the settlement of Anurādho, and also because it was founded under the constellation of Anurādho.

The still more ancient chronicles of the Dīpavamsa say that the city was founded by the minister who was called after the asterism. Knowing the immense reverence with which the Singhalese have ever regarded the stars and their interpreters, the astrologers, this statement seems to leave no room for further discussion.

Anu-rajah-pura, and meant "the City of the Ninety Kings," who reigned here from the date of its foundation, about 500 B.C. to A.D. 726, and of whom Emerson Tennant gives a complete list. But as the city bore the name of Anuradha through all these centuries, we need scarcely assume that this was given in prophetic reference to ninety future kings. So this derivation might well be deemed an exploded fallacy; but, as we all know, such die hard.

The ancient annals record that Vigitapura was surrounded by a triple battlement, and entered by a gate of iron. Its capture (about B.C. 160) was a most picturesque incident. It had been seized by Malabar invaders, and the Singhalese, led by King Dutugemunu, besieged the usurpers. For months the rocky fortress held out; then it was determined to carry it by assault, and the famous War-Elephant, Kadol, was directed to charge the eastern gate.

On he rushed, through a pitiless hail of large stones, spears, and arrows, which were hurled at him from the walls. But on his attempting to charge the gate, he met with a still warmer reception—one very familiar in the medieval warfare of Britain in the defence of Border-keeps, namely, showers of molten lead poured down from the battlements above the gateway.

This proved too much for even so docile and plucky an elephant as Kadol, who, refusing to listen to the voice of his mahout, fled precipitately, and sought refuge and alleviation for his cruel burns by immersion in the cool waters of a neighbouring tank (not Kala-wewa, of course—it was constructed six hundred years later).

After a while his pain lessened, and his wounds were dressed. Then his whole body was protected by a thickly padded coat, and over that a suit of armour made of plates

of copper. Thus equipped, he was once more induced to face the molten lead, and rushing to the assault, he succeeded with the sheer strength of his mighty head in bursting open the gate, whereupon the besieged were compelled to submit.

I have already alluded[1] to that chivalrous duel between Dutugemunu and Etāla, Prince of Mysore, when the latter was slain, and the Malabars defeated before the walls of Anuradhapura.

All through the surrounding jungle are pillars and ruins, suggestive of much that may yet reward patient excavation. Below the lake, and crossing the bed of the Kala-oya, a path has been cut for two and a half miles through dense forest to the summit of a low hill crowned by a great square mass of rocks. In ancient days temples and houses for priests were built up in the fissures between the rocks, and this Aukana Vihare must have been a place of great fame.

Here in utter solitude stands a gigantic statue of Buddha, with the right hand raised to bless the worshippers who have so long forsaken this shrine, and (as is the case in all the images I have specially noticed) wearing the robe so as to leave the right shoulder bare, in the manner which distinguishes the priests of the Siamese sect from the purer Buddhists of Burmah.

This huge statue, hewn from the solid granite crag by order of King Prakrama Bahu, is 39 feet 9 inches in height, and the colossal foot measures 7 feet 8 inches in length. The big toe is 1 foot 4 inches in length and 9 inches wide! It was accidentally discovered by a sportsman while following the track of a herd of wild elephants. A priest, whose solitude was shared only by one pupil, made his home among the rocks, devoting his own existence and training his young

[1] P. 342.

companion to striving after the attainment of that state of perfection which consists in the total extinction of all care for and interest in anything except one's own progress in this laudable effort—and all this in order to obtain the final great reward of NIRVANA, which is the highest ideal of every devout Buddhist, and of which the most accurate description is said to be THE CONDITION OF A FLAME WHICH HAS BEEN BLOWN OUT — a poor substitute indeed for CHRIST'S GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE IN THE CONSCIOUS GLADNESS OF HIS PRESENCE.

CHAPTER XII.

ANURADHAPURA.

Factory of cement pipes—Tiripane—Galkulum—Ruanweli Dagoba—The Abayagiria—Thuparama Dagoba—Jetawanarama Dagoba—Temple of the Tooth—Tomb and relic dagobas—Square and circle building material—Peacock Palace—Brazen Palace—Successive capitals—The Sacred Ark—Stone bulls—Pilgrim's tents—The sacred Bo-tree.

Continuing our drive through the jungle (occasionally passing through fine forest, and sometimes crossing a bit of open plain with rice-fields), we came to Maradankadawalla, where we spent the night, and where, in addition to the usual deafening tomtoming and shrieking of shrill pipes, we were favoured with an exhibition of most repulsive barbaric dancing. Here, and also at Ellagamua, we were told that the tomtoming is considered equal to the best French drumming—in which case I can only say, may I never be compelled to hear either!

In 1890 a valuable industry was started at Maradankadawalla—namely, the manufacture of cement concrete pipes for road culverts and for sluices, similar to those now made in the modern city of Anuradhapura, the cost of transport being saved by establishing these factories as near as possible

to new centres of work. It is encouraging to those who have so energetically promoted the work of restoration, to learn that in this district the villagers have of their own accord commenced the restoration of sixty abandoned Government tanks, each of which will become the centre of a new village and careful cultivation.

On the following morning we drove early to the Tiripane Tank, which is like a pretty natural lake, surrounded by grassy land and forest, and then on to Galkulum, altogether eleven miles. There we found graceful arches, and a most picturesque camp of temporary huts in the jungle, the breakfast house being quite a fine room. All the handsome white-humped oxen grazing near their respective large thatched waggons, and the groups of servants and drivers cooking under the shady trees, combined to make a most interesting scene.

In the afternoon (leaving the main road, which runs due north and south from one end of the Isle to the other) we rode the remaining ten miles by a bridle-path, through fine jungle, till we reached the far-famed pre-Christian city—the wonderful Anuradhapura.

The Government Agent's pleasant house had been prepared for the reception of the Governor's party, and its approach embellished by sundry fine *pandals* of jungle treasures, and a great display of coloured calico. Here we found ourselves in the very heart of the ruins of the once mighty capital—ruins totally unlike anything which I have seen in other countries. For my own part, the feeling they inspire is not so much admiration as wonder and bewilderment, as one wanders in every direction, walking or riding, only to come to more, and more, and more ruins,—ruins wrought by war and by ruthless treasure-seekers, but far more extensively and

effectually by the silent growth of vegetation, which, fastening into every neglected crevice, has overthrown massive masonry, which, but for these insidious parasites, might have defied time.

Two characteristics are specially striking: the incalculable multitude of tall monoliths—not rude stone monuments, but accurately hewn pillars of stone or granite, which in some cases must evidently have supported roofs, or some form of building; while a great number, capped with a beautifully sculptured crown, form the ornamental surroundings of the cyclopean dagobas or relic-shrines, which are the most prominent features of the whole place. These are gigantic masses of solid brickwork, built in the form of a half-egg or a bell, and crowned with a sort of spire called a *tee*, which symbolises the honorific umbrella. These huge piles are estimated to contain millions of cubic feet, and somewhere near the summit of each a secret chamber was constructed, wherein was deposited some worshipful fragment of Buddha himself, or of one of his saints, surrounded by costly offerings.

The means of access to this chamber was known only to the priests, but it is recorded in the book of the Chronicles of Ceylon, the Maha-wanso, that when, about B.C. 161, King Dutugemunu had built the Ruanweli dagoba, he ascended to the summit by means of a temporary winding staircase, and thence descended into the sacred chamber, wherein he deposited the precious casket containing the relic, whatever it was, and various other treasures.

This Ruanweli or "Golden Dust" dagoba is close to the house in which we lived, so it afforded the first and ever-present impression—a huge conical mass of crumbling red brickwork, partly veiled by quite large trees, which have

THE

RUANWELI DAGOBA, B.C. 160, ANURADHAPURA.

grown up from seeds dropped into crevices all over the building, and have somehow contrived to obtain not only a footing but a living in that seemingly unnourishing soil. It is believed to have been originally 270 feet high, but is now only 189, and is crowned by an ornamental sort of spire, which I suppose must have been added at some time of restoration.

It stands in the centre of a granite pavement, forming a square platform, which measures 500 feet in every direction. It is raised on a second platform, likewise square, and round the upper square you can still trace the broken fragments of what was once a whole regiment of elephants, which, like the huge shrine itself, were all coated with the smoothest cream-coloured chunam, like polished marble. The old chronicles say that each of these elephants was originally provided with real ivory tusks: if this were so, tusked elephants must have been more abundant in Ceylon in those days than in the present century! There are also several large stone statues of ancient kings and saints, and a small temple, surrounded by a frieze of grotesque figures in high relief.

King Dutugemunu had previously built the Miris-wetiya Dagoba, to commemorate his victory over Prince Elāla, and as he pitied his people, burdened as they had been by long wars, he refused to avail himself of his right to employ their forced labour. So he paid all his workers at a very liberal rate, and perhaps for that reason his building did not progress quite so fast as it might otherwise have done. Besides, he had many great works on hand, one of which was the erection of the Great Brazen Palace for the priests.

At all events, he did not live to complete his "Golden-Dust" relic-shrine, so his devoted brother, Saidai-tissa, had a

framework of wood made on the summit, and covered it with white cloth, that his dying eyes might behold it as it would appear when finished. The king was carried round the great building, and then laid down upon a carpet, that he might die gazing on this work which the priests told him was so meritorious. But in the hour of death the great king could find no comfort in any of the good deeds extolled by the priests, but only in recalling some acts of unselfish kindness known only to himself. A large slab of granite, surrounded by small pillars, marks the spot where the king lay in those last hours. A ruinons mound at a considerable distance is pointed out as his tomb.

It is said that in his last hours the king spoke somewhat bitterly of the state of absolute slavery to the priests in which he had lived all his life, an instance thereof commonly quoted being the erection of the Miris-wetiya dagoba, of which it is averred that he built it as a penance for having on one occasion so far forgotten his rule of giving the priests a share of everything, that he had eaten his curry, with the usual accompaniments of chillies and sambal (Miris-wetiya), without setting aside a portion for the priests! However, as I have just mentioned, a more plausible origin is assigned for the erection of this monnment.

A Siamese prince has recently provided funds for the restoration of this dagoba (whether in memory of the king's atonement anent the curry-stuff, or of his victory over the Malabar invaders, I cannot say). It is said that the sculptures and tracery on the three chapels connected with this dagoba, now exposed to view for the first time in the present century, are the most delicate and artistic that have as yet been disinterred. But the addition of some handsome brick arches, far up the sides, are criticised as being an incon-

gruous though effectual method of arresting the process of disintegration.

The native chronicles give minute details of the building of the Ruanweli Dagoba, and of the enormous labour expended on preparing a foundation capable of sustaining so ponderous a weight. It was dug to the depth of a hundred cubits, and filled with round stones, which were trampled by the largest elephants, their feet being protected by leather boots. These stones were embedded in clay, and over them was poured a layer of cement, then of sandstone, and over all were laid great plates of iron and of brass.

After the king's death, his brother, who succeeded to the throne, surmounted the great edifice with a spire of glass as a protection against lightning. The great damage was done about the year A.D. 1214 by Maagha, a ruthless treasure-seeker, who, in his determination to reach the relic-chamber, tore down all the upper part of the structure, which accounts for its present reduced height.

I found a capital point whence to sketch this huge red ruin, veiled with green and grey foliage, with a wonderful foreground of a multitude of handsome stone pillars with elaborately sculptured square capitals—some upright, some leaning, others fallen and half overgrown with trailing vines—and overshadowed by fine trees with quaintly twisted stems.

In the distance, to the left of the Ruanweli dagoba, towered another — the Abayagiria dagoba, or Fortress of Safety, originally the greatest of all these monstrous piles, its full height having been about 405 feet (*i.e.*, 50 feet higher than St Paul's) and its circumference 1130 feet! Its height is now considerably reduced, but the square platform on which it stands still covers an area of eight acres! And around

it are the ruins of various chapels and other buildings connected with a great college of priests; and among the ruins are many finely sculptured stones, a gigantic seven-headed cobra, and sundry flowers and figures. All this was the work of King Walagambahu, who thus (B.C. 89) commemorated the expulsion of the Malabar invaders and his own recovery of the throne.

A few years ago the Government explorers tunnelled right into the heart of this huge "Fortress of Safety," through 200 feet of solid brickwork, because of a tradition that therein were buried very ancient books inscribed on metal plates. But on reaching the jealously guarded secret chamber, nothing whatever was found save a few beads, of no value beyond that due to their antiquity. The prisoners who were employed on this work of excavation, and on the restoration of the summit tower, have left rude steps along the side of the brickwork by which it is now possible to ascend to a height of 231 feet above the platform—*i.e.*, 549 feet above sea-level—which, amid such very level surroundings, secures a widespread view in every direction over the wide expanse of park, land, and forest, dotted with the huge monuments of olden days, glimpses of stone pillars, and of glistening lakes and tanks, and bounded on the one side by the blue Ritigala and Matele hills, and on the other by Mihintale, the sacred mountain, so rich in ruins and in legends.

I found another fascinating spot for a very comprehensive sketch — seated beneath an overhanging tree whose roots were all entwined with a flight of beautifully sculptured steps, quaint animals, and other carved stones, which, with a couple of dark miniature dagobas to the left, formed an effective foreground for the really beautiful Thuparama

dagoba, which stands on a raised mound approached by a fine flight of steps, and surrounded by 128 most elegant slim white columns with beautifully sculptured capitals. They are in three circles, the fifty-two nearest the dagoba being 20 feet high: all of these are monoliths. The great building itself was cleared of jungle, restored, and recoated with chunam about sixty years ago. It is crowned by a gigantic *tee* or spire, apparently representing seven honorific umbrellas, piled in the manner still realistically done in Burmah; and the eye is carried still higher by a group of tall palmyra palms, while a great temple-tree loaded with creamy fragrant blossom stands in relief against a background of dark foliage.

Then to the left, on lower ground, another stairway, with more quaint sculptured beasts and figures, leads up to a group of monoliths (two of which still support a third like a capstone). Here stand a group of pillars with most curiously sculptured capitals, quite unlike any others in the neighbourhood. They are described as "cuneiform mouldings," but some prosaic person has compared them to a gigantic double tooth with fangs!—that image being suggested by the fact that this is indeed the original Dalada Maligawa, or Palace of the Tooth, having been the first of the many resting-places of the famous tooth of Buddha, of which, as also of the many palaces erected for it in the course of its wanderings in Ceylon, I have already spoken, so need only add that this building, where it was welcomed in the first instance, was erected by King Kirti Sri Megaha-warna in A.D. 311.

Fa-Hian, the Chinese traveller who visited Ceylon about A.D. 413, gives a wonderful account of the gorgeous ceremonials in honour of the Sacred Tooth—showing how, after

great festivities, it was carried in procession to its summer home in the mountains, along a road so thickly strewn with flowers that the whole air was perfumed. Then strange miracle-plays were enacted, representing the chief events of Buddha's life, with appropriate scenery and costumes, and introducing figures of elephants and stags so delicately coloured as to be scarcely discernible from life.

Strange, is it not, to find these curious religious plays in favour wellnigh two thousand years ago!

As I have frequently referred to my selection of scenes for 'Comprehensive Sketches,' I may mention that in all my travels, from the Himalayas to the remotest corners of the South Seas, I have always carried, in addition to a considerable variety of smaller sketching-blocks, one large sheet of galvanised zinc, turned over at the edges to give additional strength, and measuring 31 by 23 inches. On this (no matter how tired at night, in tent or in rest-house, where very often my large sheet of American waterproof, laid on the floor, formed my only sponging-table) I stretched a fresh sheet of drawing-paper as soon as it was possible to remove the last sketch, which was then laid with its predecessors in a flat tin box, proof against rain, white ants, and other foes.

The large zinc block was pinned up in white cloth, and strapped up in the aforesaid waterproof, which was the carpet on which I sat while sketching. I found that, from not being cramped for space, I could work much more rapidly, and produce a far more comprehensive and realistic picture, than by smaller studies of separate portions. In every case I always devoted several hours to most careful pencil-drawing, in order to secure accuracy of detail, before indulging in the joy of colour.

I think I have alluded elsewhere to the impossibility of preserving drawing-paper for water-colour painting in the damp tropics. The rapid development of mildew is so inevitable, that the artist has no alternative but just to make the best of it, and by long experience I found that the only thing to do was, just before beginning to colour, to wash over the whole paper with pure water. Then when great stars of mildew revealed themselves, I fed each hungry fungus with a good brushful of white paint. In colouring it is necessary to avoid these patches as much as possible, or work over them finely with a very dry brush. By observing these precautions I have produced many effective pictures on paper, which at first sight seemed absolutely hopeless, but on which now no one would suspect the presence of the once rampant mildew. At the same time, my rash attempt to "improve" a sketch done in the tropics, by a wash of colour, or even of water, will inevitably reveal countless troublesome stars and patches, previously invisible.

To return to the Thuparama dagoba, which is the oldest and most venerated of all these great buildings. It was built by King Dewananpia-tissa, "the Delight of the Gods," who ascended the throne B.C. 307, and having obtained possession of Buddha's right collar-bone, proceeded to build this wonderful shrine for its reception. (I cannot refrain from reiterating how culpably careless were poor Prince Gautama's cremators! We have seen the dagoba at Kalawewa purporting to contain his jawbone, while another at Bintenne was erected B.C. 164 to contain a bone from his thorax.) The height of the Thuparama dagoba is about 63 feet.

The slim monolithic columns all round it are peculiarly elegant, though unmeaning except as ornaments. A similar

arrangement of three rows of pillars of equally delicate workmanship, numbering respectively 20, 28, and 40, surround the Lankarama, which is a smaller but very fine dagoba, of unknown date. It is attributed to King Maha-Sen, who succeeded to the throne A.D. 275, and who, having in the earlier years of his reign adopted a creed known to orthodox Buddhists as "the Wytulian heresy" (supposed to have been Brahminical), had done all in his power to suppress Buddhism and destroy its monuments; but finding that the inevitable result would be to raise a general rebellion, he recanted, and became a zealous Buddhist, not only rebuilding all the monuments and priests' houses which he had destroyed, but building new ones to outvie those of his predecessors.

The chief of these is the Jetawanarama, which, though not originally quite so large as the Abayagiria, was 316 feet high, and is still 249 feet high, with a diameter of 360 feet. Sir James Emerson Tennant calculated that even now it measures twenty millions of cubical feet, giving sufficient material to raise eight thousand houses, each with 20 feet frontage, which would form thirty streets half a mile in length, and would construct a town the size of Ipswich or Coventry, or form a wall one foot in thickness and two feet in height, reaching from London to Edinburgh!

Now this mountain of brickwork is covered to the very summit with large trees, of such frugal habit as apparently to live on air, for they surely can find no sustenance in the crumbling bricks!

Those slim columns with the ornamental crown, which never supported anything, are most puzzling, no one having any idea why they were erected. The only rude parallel that occurs to me, as possibly throwing light on the subject,

is a custom which prevails in certain tribes in the Kassia hills on the confines of Upper India, where a cromlech is erected over the ashes of the dead, whose spirits are invoked by the living. Should the prayers thus offered be granted, a great monolith is erected close to the tomb, in acknowledgment thereof, and in due course of time these multiply, so that some favoured tombs are surrounded with a large group of such tributes of gratitude. It is just possible that this rude phase of ancestor worship may give us the clue to the more elaborate productions of a highly civilised race, whose object was equally the invocation of the dead. Whatever meaning may have once attached to them is now utterly forgotten, even by the priests.

As regards the dagobas themselves, there are two classes. First, those which were built as depositories for sacred relics (these include all the cyclopean buildings); and secondly, a multitude of small ones, which were merely hollow circular domes, built over a lower square chamber which was the receptacle for the ashes of some cremated monk or nun. Apparently the only means of access to this chamber, beneath the square platform, was by a square opening beneath the dome; but when once the dome had been erected, the living might no more enter the chamber of the dead. Within the chamber, at the four corners, forming a sort of octagon, were stone slabs bearing the name of the dead, and a short catalogue of his or her good deeds, together with a representation of Buddha's feet, the trident, the sun and moon, and other Buddhistic emblems.

Unfortunately, at Anuradhapura most of these tomb-dagobas have been destroyed by sacrilegious treasure-seekers.

Though the dagobas in this place are specially interesting as being the largest and oldest in Ceylon, the same form is

reproduced in many more modern cities, and in connection with Buddhist temples all over the Isle, all[1] built on the same pattern — namely, a circular building on a square platform.

(At Chi-Chen, in Central America, there are ancient buildings, which in size, form of dome, and the ornamental tower or *tec* on the summit, are said to be apparently identical with those of Ceylon. It would be interesting to know whether they also have the square platform.)

It is worthy of note that the commonest type of grave all over North China, from Shanghai to Peking, simply consists of a circular earthen mound erected on a square platform of earth, the mound being generally crowned by a spire or knob. These are made in miniature for the very poor, very large for the wealthy, and cyclopean for emperors. This combination is the mystic symbolism which, to the Chinaman, represents the dual principle in nature. The square is the feminine symbol, and represents the earth. The circle suggests the male principle, and symbolises heaven. The same principle is worked out in the construction of the great Temples of Heaven and Earth at Peking.[2]

It is interesting and curious to find this ancient symbolism revered and perpetuated by the professors of a creed to which such details are certainly foreign.

The external square was repeated by an internal pillar which marked the exact centre of the dagoba: in the case of

[1] The Thuparama and Lankarama dagobas are apparently exceptions to this rule, for though the tall circular spire rests on a square platform, on the summit of the dagoba, the great massive buildings are raised on circular mounds.

[2] These I have described fully in 'Wanderings in China,' vol. ii. pp. 172, 175, 180, 322. See also a ground-plan of the Temple of Heaven, and notes on tomb-temples in 'Meeting the Sun,' by Will Simpson, F.R.G.S., pp. 176, 190-193. Longmans, Green, & Co.

the tomb-dagoba the pillar was sometimes square, sometimes circular. It was about a foot square, and rose about four feet above ground, and on it rested the casket containing the ashes of the dead. Such caskets were generally miniature dagobas of the same bell shape.

In the construction of the gigantic relic-shrines, it appears that, in the first place, the exact centre was marked by an upright monolith accurately squared, and placed so as to have the four sides true to the points of the compass. The squares of the platform and outer wall were then marked out,—also the true circle for the dagoba,—and the whole was built up solidly; no chamber of any sort till the appointed height was reached, perhaps 15 feet from the summit. But so soon as the central square pillar was built up, another was placed on the top of it, "truly perpendicular, and securely fixed in position by mortice and tennon." Thus it was carried right up from the base, to a height of from 200 to 400 feet, to the relic-chamber, which was formed as a perfect square facing the cardinal points; and here, as in the tomb-dagobas, this stone pillar projected about four feet through the floor. It was overlaid with gold, and supported a circular golden tray, on which was laid the casket containing the precious relic, which may have been only a hair from a saint's eyebrow, or a revered toe-tail, but was probably accompanied by treasures of very much greater interest, which fully accounts for the anxiety of ruthless marauders to pillage these depositories.

Here, for example, is a list published by Mr Wickremasinghe of the various objects enshrined in a dagoba at Hanguranketa: "Two gold chains and two medals, studded with valuable gems; 160 silver images, 199 bronze images, 604 precious stones, 2000 uncut stones, and many other

objects, including two boards for binding a book, of silver and gold, studded with gems; five books of the Vinaya Pitaka written on silver plates; seven books of the Abhidharma Litaka on silver plates, as also a number of other books; one book written on 900 copper plates, each three spans long, and extracts from various religious books written on 37 plates of gold, each plate weighing five English sovereigns."

Of the cyclopean relic-dagobas,[1] there are seven within the limits of Anuradhapura itself, without reference to those at Mehintale and elsewhere in the neighbourhood. These seven are—

	Supposed original height.	Present height.	Diameter at base.	Date begun.
Thuparama . .	...	62½	59	B.C. 307
Mirisawetiya . .	...	82½	164	B.C. 164
Ruanweli . . .	270	189	379	B.C. 161
Abayagiria . .	405	231	325	B.C. 89
Jetawanarama . .	316	249	360	A.D. 302
Lankarama . .	...	32½	44	Unknown.
Seta Chaitiya . .	20	Too ruinous to ascertain.		B.C. 119

The latter, though generally known by this name, which means "the Stone Temple," is properly called the Lajjika-vihara, having been built by King Lajji-tissa. Though small, and in very ruinous condition, it is deemed highly sacred, and its stone carving and stairways are considered very fine.

Of the other dagobas which are scattered about in the jungle, I may mention the Kiri Wihara (Milk Temple), which is so entirely buried beneath encroaching earth, that its existence is only known by the tradition which declares it to lie buried beneath a huge grassy mound.

[1] Various derivations are given: *datu*, "a relic," and *gabbhan*, "a shrine"; or, *deha*, "the body," and *gopa*, "that which preserves."

All the dagobas at Anuradhapura are built of brick, and perhaps their erection here was suggested by the fact of finding building material in such abundance, in the form of beds of clay ready for the manufacture of millions of bricks—though, strange to say, the ancient chronicles relate how, to facilitate the building of the Ruanweli dagoba, one of the gods created the requisite quantity of bricks at a place sixteen miles distant; but there is no record of their having been miraculously transported to the spot.

Of course, in viewing these ruinous red mounds, it requires an effort of imagination to picture them as they appeared when so thickly coated with chunam as to resemble huge domes of polished cream-coloured marble. This chunam was still in use when the oldest European bungalows were built, and gives their pillared verandahs a delightfully cool appearance; but, as I have already mentioned, this manufacture is a lost art, though it is known that chunam was a preparation of lime made from burned oyster-shells, mixed with the water of cocoa-nuts and the glutinous juice of the fruit called paragaha.[1]

As regards the multitude of great columns, "moon-stones," and other large monoliths, some were obtained from masses of rock very near the city, which still bear the marks of the wedges by which the pillars were split off from the rock. But many were quarried from beds of mountain limestone and granitic gneiss in the neighbourhood of Mihintale, a very sacred mountain about eight miles from Anuradhapura. In these quarries you still discern the holes from which, two thousand years ago, the huge blocks and slabs were chiselled, —a stone so hard as to defy the ravages of time and weather, for the most delicate sculptures remain as perfect as though

[1] *Dillena dentata.*

only completed yesterday—each bead on the ornaments of the figures, each detail of flower or foliage, retaining all its original sharpness.

Of course, in exploring any scene of ancient historic interest, it is essential to have previously gathered as much information as possible regarding it, for nowhere does the eye so truly see what it brings the capacity for seeing as in visiting the ruined cities of bygone ages. This is certainly true of this labyrinth of ruinous brickwork and sculptured stones, so bewildering till one begins to get something like a clue to its main features.

In point of fact, most of what remains of the once mighty city of Anuradhapura, the magnificent, lies buried beneath from six to fifteen feet of soil, waiting for a whole army of excavators to come and supplement the feeble force now working for Government. And yet, although the forest now overgrows the whole plain, so that the only break in your long ride is coming to an occasional open tract, where fine old trees grow singly, as in an English park, enough remains above ground to enable you to recall vivid visions of the past.

For a space of sixteen square miles the somewhat scrubby jungle, stunted by the prevalence of droughts, is but a veil for the masses of masonry and brickwork; a wilderness of granite pillars with richly carved capitals, and flights of steps, some covered with intricate carving, as perfect to-day as when, two thousand years ago, they were trodden by the unsandalled feet of reverent worshippers or busy merchants. The designs of these stairs are beautiful—on either side supported by rich scroll-patterns, and graceful figures overshadowed by the seven-headed cobra, supposed to be the emblem of vigilance; while the huge semicircular stone

which forms the lowest step (commonly called "moon-stone") generally represents a sacred lotus-blossom, round which circle rows of horses, elephants, bullocks, and the invariable geese held sacred by all ancient nations. These stones are peculiar to Ceylon. Strange to say, no two of these are exactly alike in arrangement of detail.

Broad roads have been cleared through the dense jungle, embracing the chief points of interest, and as you ride slowly along these or any of the innumerable pilgrim-paths which here intersect the forest, you see on every side the same wilderness of hewn stones, heaped up in dire confusion, all overturned by the insidious growth of vegetation, and at last you emerge at some huge bathing tank, all of carved stone-work; or it may be on the brink of a great artificial lake, formed by an embankment of cyclopean masonry. Or else you find yourself in presence of some huge figure of Buddha, perhaps reclining in the dreamless repose of Nirvana, perhaps sitting in ceaseless contemplation of the lonely forest — a mighty image of dark stone brought from afar, at some remote time when worshippers were legion. Now perhaps a handful of flowers, or some ashes of burnt camphor, tell of some solitary villager who has here offered his simple prayer.

Or the object which suddenly presents itself to your amazed sight may be one of the gigantic dagobas of which I have already spoken—one of many similar buildings which lie scattered in various parts of Ceylon, in the silent depths of vast forests which now cover the sites where once stood busy populous cities.

It is recorded in the ancient chronicles that on great festivals these dagobas were festooned from base to summit with endless garlands of the most fragrant and lovely flowers,

till the whole building resembled some huge shrub in blossom. Others were literally buried beneath heaps of jessamine. One of the relic shrines which was thus adorned, the Jetawana-rama, towered, as I have said, to a height of 316 feet.

Though no reverent hands now garland this desolate shrine, kind nature still strews it with fairest blossoms, and has covered it, right up to the summit, with trees of largest growth, all matted together with beautiful flowering creepers. These have now been in a measure cleared away so as to reveal the form of the gigantic dome, capped with a ruinous red spire four storeys high, circular, on a square base. Tall monoliths and sculptured figures at the base of this huge mass of masonry afford the eye a standard by which to estimate its height. My own feeling as I sat at work sketching it, as in duty bound, was of amazement that any human beings could have constructed an object so oppressively large, useless, and hideous.

Of vanished glories, one of the chief must have been the Monara- or Mayura-paya—*i.e.*, the Peacock Palace of the kings, so called not only from the brilliancy of the colours with which it was painted externally, but also from the abundance of precious stones, gold, and silver employed in its decoration. It is described as having been a building three storeys high, with ranges of cool rooms underground. Whatever may still remain of it is all underground, buried beneath a grassy mound; but round it, as if keeping sentry round the royal palace, stand a circle of fine stone pillars with beautifully sculptured capitals.

But the crowning marvel of Anuradhapura was the Lowa-mahapaya, or Great Brazen Palace, a monastery built by King Dutugemunu about B.C. 164, for the accommodation of one thousand priests. It was nine storeys high, probably pyra-

PILGRIM'S CAMP AND THREE STONE BULLS,

NEAR

THE RUINS OF THE BRAZEN TEMPLE.

midal, so that the top storey was much smaller than the lowest. The latter was built up from a foundation supported by sixteen hundred granite pillars, all of which, the Rajavali implies, were covered with copper. Each priest (or rather monk) had his own little dormitory, and (as no great man could possibly allow his inferior to sit higher than himself) the poor old monks of highest rank had to occupy the uppermost rooms, just under the roof with its glittering brazen tiles—rather warm quarters on a hot summer's day!

A most interesting account of this palace, and its various apartments, has been preserved in the Maha-wanso, which is the book of ancient national chronicles. In one great hall were golden pillars, supported by golden statues of lions and elephants, while the walls were inlaid with flower-patterns of costly gems, and festoons of pearls. In the centre stood a magnificent ivory throne of wondrous workmanship, for the high priest, while above it was the white chatta or umbrella, the oriental type of sovereignty. On either side of this throne were set a golden image of the Sun, and a silver one of the Moon; and the whole palace was richly carpeted, and full of luxurious couches and divans.

Amongst the curious statistics of the Great Brazen Palace, we hear of a stone canoe, twenty-five cubits long, made to contain some special drink for the thousand priests—a very capacious punch-bowl! A huge hollowed stone, 63 feet long, 3½ feet broad, and 2 feet 10 in. in depth, was pointed out to us among the ruins of this great monastery as having been used for this purpose; while another hollowed block of granite, 10 feet long, 2 feet deep, and 6 feet wide, lying near the Jetawanarama, was shown as that wherein the daily allowance of rice was measured out. Certainly the proportion of sack was largely in excess of the solids.

Minute details are given of the daily rations provided for all these priests by the king's bounty, as also of the vessels of sugar, buffalo butter, and honey provided for the builders, whose work, however, did not prove enduring, for in the following reign this "Tower of Babel" had to be taken down, and it was rebuilt only seven storeys high. Two hundred years later these were reduced to five storeys, and seventy years afterwards, in A.D. 240, it must have been entirely rebuilt, as the reigning monarch changed the position of the supporting pillars.

When (A.D. 275) King Maha-Sen succeeded to the throne, full of iconoclastic zeal, he demolished this lofty "clergy-house," as well as many more buildings connected with Buddhism, and used them as quarries for the erection of new shrines for the images supposed to have been sanctioned by "the Wytulian heresy." But when he threw over his new love to return to the old, he rebuilt the Brazen Temple and all else that he had destroyed. Unfortunately some of the 1600 granite monoliths had been broken; so, to make up the number, several were split. This was done by boring holes in the stone and therein driving wooden wedges, into which water was poured to make the wood swell,—a simple but effective device, which was first adopted in England about two thousand years later.

How strange it is to think that when our ancestors sailed the stormy seas in their little skin-covered wicker boats, or paddled canoes more roughly hollowed from trees than those quaint outriggers which here excite our wonder, Ceylon was the chief centre of Eastern traffic, having its own fleet of merchant ships, wherein to export (some say) its superfluous grain—certainly other products—to distant lands! Possibly its traffic may even have extended to Rome, to whose his-

torians it was known as Taprobane, and of whose coins as many as eighteen hundred, of the reigns of Constantine and other emperors, have been found at Batticaloa.

Think, too, that while Britons wore a full-dress of only woad, and lived in wattle huts, these islanders had vast cities, with stately palaces and other great buildings, and monuments whose ruins even now vie in dimensions with the Egyptian pyramids.

Besides these massive ruins and this endless profusion of sculptured granite columns, and noble stairs which once led up to stately temples, how poor and mean all the modern temples do appear, with their wooden pillars and walls of clay, the work of pigmy descendants of giants!

Here, four hundred years before the birth of Christ, all that constituted Eastern luxury reigned supreme: great tanks watered beautiful gardens, and in the streets busy life fretted and toiled.

Even allowing largely for oriental exaggeration, we can form some idea of the greatness of the city from the native annals, which tell how, including these tanks and gardens, it covered two hundred and fifty-six square miles, the whole of which was enclosed by a strong outer wall, which was not completed till the first century after Christ. From the north gate to the south gate measured sixteen miles, and the old chronicles tell that it would take a man four hours to walk from the north to the south gate, or across the city from the rising to the setting sun.

The writer enumerates the principal streets, and it gives a strangely familiar touch to hear of Great King Street, while Moon Street reminds us of the planet-worship of the early Singhalese. Moon Street consisted of eleven thousand houses, many of which were large beautiful mansions two

storeys high. There were lesser streets without number, bearing the name of the caste or profession of its inhabitants.

All were level and straight; the broad carriage-way was sprinkled with glittering white sand, while the footpath on either side was covered with dark sand. Thus the foot passengers were protected from the dangers of the swift riders, chariots, and carriages. Some carriages were drawn by four horses. There were elephants innumerable, rich merchants, archers, jugglers, women laden with flowers for temple offerings, and crowds of all sorts.

Not only had they cunning craftsmen of all manner of trades, but the most minute care was bestowed on such practical matters as the sanitation of their cities. Thus in Anuradhapura there was a corps of 200 men whose sole work was the daily removal of all impurity from the city, besides a multitude of sweepers: 150 men were told off to carry the dead to the cemeteries, which were well cared for by numerous officials. "Naked mendicants and fakirs," "castes of the heathen," and the aboriginal Yakkos and Nagas—*i.e.*, the demon and snake worshippers—each had distinct settlements allotted to them in the suburbs.

Within the city there were halls for music and dancing, temples of various religions (all of which received liberal support from the earlier kings), almshouses and hospitals both for men and beasts, the latter receiving a special share of attention. One of the kings was noted for his surgical skill in treating the diseases of elephants, horses, and snakes. Another set aside rice to feed the squirrels in his garden, and a third devoted the produce of a thousand fields to provide for the care of sick animals.

At every corner of the countless streets were houses for preaching, that all the passers-by might learn the wisdom of

Buddha, whose temples, then as now, were daily strewn with the choicest flowers, garlands of jessamine, and the fragrant champac-blossoms, and beautiful white and pink water-lilies (the sacred symbolical lotus). On all great festivals the streets were spanned by arches covered with gold and silver flags, while in the niches were placed statues holding lamps or golden vases full of flowers.

At a later date the records of Pollonarua are almost identical with these. Yet ere long both these cities were doomed to be forsaken. The huge tanks which watered the beautiful gardens and irrigated all the land were left to go to utter ruin; and for centuries all has lain hushed and still. When foreigners invaded the Isle, it was the policy of the Kandyans to keep the interior inaccessible, so there were only difficult paths through dense jungle. Consequently, although Knox had written of the wonderful ruins through which he had passed when making his escape from his long captivity in Kandy, they continued unknown till they were re-discovered by Lieutenant Skinner about 1833, when surveying for his great work of road-making.

At that time the site of the ancient city was the haunt of vast herds of elephants, sambur and fallow deer, buffalo, monkeys, and jackals. Porcupines and leopards sought shelter among the ruins, the tanks were alive with pelicans, flamingoes, and other aquatic birds, and large flocks of peafowl sought refuge in the cool shade, or sunned themselves in the green glades where once were busy streets. Of course, with the return of so many human beings, these shy creatures have retreated to more secluded hiding-places.

Here and there, on the outskirts of Anuradhapura, there are great heaps of stones—huge cairns, to which, even to this day, each passer-by must, without fail, add a stone, though

the people have long since utterly forgotten what event they commemorate.

Imagine such a fate as this creeping over the great capitals, where a hundred and sixty-five successive kings reigned in all the pomp and luxury of an oriental court.[1] Their history has been handed down to us in the Mahawanso, or "Genealogy of the Great,"—that precious manuscript to which frequent reference is so necessary to a right understanding of events in Ceylon. Its first section—which was compiled about the year A.D. 470 from native annals—treats of the Great Dynasty—*i.e.*, the kings who reigned from 543 B.C. to 301 A.D., after which comes the history of those who are classed as the Sulu-wanse, or "lower race," although that list includes the great king Prakrama Bahu, by whose orders the work was completed up to his time—*i.e.*, 1266 A.D. Finally, it was carried on to the year 1758 A.D. by command of the last King of Kandy, all compiled from authentic native documents.

Being written in Pali verse, none but the most learned

[1] The reigns of most of these kings have been neatly summarised, as so many tales in which "irrigation, subjugation, and assassination" form the main incidents, to which we may add the building of useless relic-shrines. Many of the kings were distinguished only for their amazing superstition, and the first queen who held the throne was so bad as to be remembered only as "the infamous Anula." Having poisoned her husband, King Chora Naga—*i.e.*, Naga the Marauder—and also her son Tisso, she successively selected a porter of the palace, a carpenter, a carrier of firewood, a Brahman, and various other lovers, to share her throne, till she was finally put to death by her own grandson.

About A.D. 30 there reigned a king, by name Yatalaka Tissa, whose history affords a curious true version of "The Prince and the Peasant." His gate-porter Subha resembled him so strikingly, that sometimes the king amused himself by exchanging dresses with him. Subha, however, found these tastes of royal honour so attractive, that he contrived to effect the exchange in good earnest. The king was dethroned, and the porter took his place, and reigned till he was slain by the next man. And so the long tale goes on.

priests could possibly read it, and, as a matter of fact, no one seems to have been able to do so, until in 1826 Mr Turnour, of the Ceylon Civil Service, set himself to master this terribly difficult task, and, with marvellous patience and ingenuity, succeeded in so doing. Therein we obtain the clue to what at first seems such a mystery—how a race which produced work so wonderful as these great cities, a people so powerful, and in some respects so wise, as those old Singhalese (themselves, we must remember, conquerors from Northern India), should have been driven from province to province till all their old power and energy seems to have died out.

The mischief seems to have begun when the King of Anuradhapura first took into his pay mercenary troops from Malabar. These were the Tamils, whose descendants remain to this day. They rebelled, slew the king, and held the throne for twenty years. Driven from the Island, they returned, and again held it for forty years. Once more they were expelled, and once more fresh hordes poured in from Malabar, and landing simultaneously on all parts of the Island, again took possession of the capital, where some settled, while others returned to the mainland laden with plunder.

During all these years an ever-recurring contest was maintained between the Buddhists and their Brahmin invaders. There was the usual pulling down and building up of temples, so that by A.D. 300 the native records declare that the glory of the city was utterly destroyed, and that the royal race of children of the Sun had been exterminated. Nevertheless, it still continued to be a great powerful town, enclosed by strong walls.

The struggle with the Malabars continued till about A.D.

726, when the kings forsook Anuradhapura and made Pollonarua, farther to the south, their capital, and more beautiful than the old city. Still the Malabars pushed on, and overran every corner of the Island.

At length, A.D. 1153, a mighty king arose, by name Prakrama Bahu, who with a strong hand delivered his country, and, driving out the invaders, established peace and security. He rebuilt the temples of Buddha; and made or restored fifteen hundred tanks, and canals without number, to irrigate and fertilise the thirsty land. Yet thirty years after the death of this great, good man, his family had become so utterly weak through their incessant quarrels, that the Malabars once more returned and seized the tempting prize.

And so the story of strife continued, till in 1505 the Portuguese came, and then followed the further complications of the struggles between Portuguese and Dutch, and later the French and English took their turn as disquieting elements.

But the consequence of all these fightings was the removal of the seat of Government from one part of the Isle to another, so that in many a now desolate jungle there still remain some ruins of ancient cities which successively claimed the honour of being the capital for the time being. The oldest of these was Tamana-nuwara, which was the capital of Wijayo, the conqueror, B.C. 543. His successor founded Oopatissa-nuwara, calling it after himself. Then Maagama and Kellania had their turns before Anuradhapura asserted its supremacy. With the exception of those eighteen years when Kaasyapa (the parricide and suicide) lived on the fortified rock of Sigiri,[1] and one year when King Kaloona removed the capital to Dondra or Dewa-nuwara, the

[1] P. 346.

city of the gods, and likewise committed suicide, Anuradhapura reigned supreme for 1353 years, when it was abandoned in favour of Pollonarua: three hundred years later Anuradhapura became the capital during one stormy reign, and Roohoona, Kalu-totta, and Kaacha-ragama were each the royal home for a brief interval.

Then came the reign of the great King Prakrama, when the glory of Pollonarua was at its height, and continued the capital during the seventeen changes of sovereignty which followed in the twenty years after his death. From 1235 to the end of the century, Dambadeniya was the chief city. Then Pollonarua had another turn. After this, Kurunegalla, Gampola, Sengada-galla-nuwara, Kandy, and Cotta were successively the royal headquarters.

Now one after another of these great centres has fallen into comparative neglect, and several into total oblivion. Giant trees have overgrown both palaces and markets; beautiful parasitic plants have loosened the great blocks of stone, and the dark massive ruins are veiled by lovely creepers, and all the wealth of tropical scenery, through which (as they did so recently in Anuradhapura) bears and leopards roam undisturbed, while birds of all glorious hues flit through the foliage. Only at the time of certain great festivals do devout pilgrims still wend their way through the silent depths of these dark forests, to do homage at these shrines; and the stillness of night is broken by their pious ejaculations as they circle round the huge relic-shrines.

At the time of our visit to Anuradhapura, the pilgrims had assembled in vast numbers to celebrate the festival of the Midsummer New Moon, and their simple camps — yellow tents of great taliput palm-leaves, of which each pilgrim carries one section, to act as sunshade or umbrella—formed a

very picturesque feature in the scene. Half-a-dozen pieces of leaf, supported by sticks, form the slight shelter which is all they need. (Many carry one of the tough fibrous sheaths which has enveloped the young flower of the areca-palm, and which serves as a simple rice-plate, while an ingeniously folded palmyra-palm leaf forms an excellent water-bucket.)

With reverent steps they trod the green forest-glades, marking the course of the main streets of the holy city, and guided by yellow-robed Buddhist priests. Many of the pilgrims carried small flags and banners, and one group carried a miniature ark containing a golden lotus-blossom, to be offered to the sacred Bo-tree.

The ark, I may observe, holds the same place of honour in Ceylon as it does in many other nations. To all travellers in the Himalayas, the ark veiled with curtains, within which is concealed the idol most deeply reverenced, is a familiar object,— an ark which is carried on staves through the forests, with music and dancing, and which, both in its proportions and in all the ceremonies connected with it, bears strange affinity to the sacred ark of the Israelites.[1] We find it again in the Christian Churches of Abyssinia and in the Buddhist temples of Japan; and here in Ceylon every important *dewali* (that is, every Malabar temple) has an ark very similar to that of the Himalayas, the sacred objects, which are so jealously concealed from the gaze of even devout worshippers, being in this case the mystic arrows of the god or deified hero there held in reverence. Once a-year, at a great full moon festival, this ark is borne forth on its staves, and carried in sunwise circuit round the temple amid great rejoicing.

[1] I have described many such arkite ceremonies in 'In the Himalayas,' pp. 361-371, 436. Published by Chatto & Windus.

That tiny ark, containing the mystic lotus-blossom, was not the only link we noticed to the customs of far-distant lands. At the entrance to the Wata Daghè, at Pollonarua, lies a stone precisely similar to the Clach Brach at St Oran's Chapel in Iona, with a row of hollows, said to have been worn by the continual action of stone or crystal balls, which the passers-by turned sunwise to bring them luck. And here, in Anuradhapura, are three stone bulls, which women who have not been blessed with offspring also drag round sunwise, that they may ensure the speedy birth of an heir. One of these seems to have formerly revolved on a pivot, but now main force does all.

Certainly the most venerated objects of superstition are not often impressive to the eye, and these are three insignificant little animals, measuring respectively 3 feet 6, 2 feet 9, and 1 foot 7. They lie on the turf beneath a great tree—a curious foreground to a most picturesque pilgrim's camp of yellow palm-leaves like gigantic fans, banked up with withered boughs; women and children busy round their camp fires, and beyond the curling blue smoke rise the pillars of the Brazen Palace.

Thousands of these primitive tents were scattered about in groups in the park-like grounds, and I had the good fortune to witness a very striking scene on the night of our arrival, when all night long, by the light of a glorious full moon, great companies, guided by bare-armed and bare-footed yellow-robed priests, circled round the Ruanweli dagoba, shouting Saadhu, the Buddhist form of "All hail!" But in making their circle they kept their left side towards the relic-shrine, which in sun-lore all the world over is the recognised form of invoking a curse instead of a blessing! But on the beautifully sculptured "moon-stones" at the base

of the great temple and palace-stairs, all the animals—elephants, oxen, horses, lions, sacred geese—have their right side towards the central lotus-blossom; so they are making the orthodox sunwise turn.

On returning to Britain I compared notes with my kinsman, J. F. Campbell of Islay, and found that he also had been impressed by these various peculiarities of sunwise and anti-sunwise turns; and he noticed, moreover, that all creeping plants in the jungle coil with their left side towards the centre.

But the object of deepest reverence to the pilgrims, and of exceeding interest to us all, was the Peepul or sacred Bo-tree (as irreverent Britons, in their love for abbreviation, call the Maha Jaya Sri Bodingahawahanse, or great illustrious sacred Tree of Wisdom, which is really believed to be the very identical tree which was planted here in the year B.C. 288, and which consequently must now be 2180 years old). What was shown to us as the original tree was such a wizened little old stump, that we agreed it might very well be the genuine article, and the ancestor of the generations of old Bo-trees which surround it within the sacred enclosure, to say nothing of all others in every corner of Ceylon, all of which have been propagated from seed.

Assuredly no other tree has ever occupied so important a place in history, or had its own story so minutely recorded from generation to generation. Sir James Emerson Tennant[1] quotes twenty-five extracts from various native chronicles, and other ancient sources (and these, he says, are but a few out of a multitude), stating the various honours paid to the sacred tree in different reigns, from its first arrival, nearly three hundred years before the Christian era, till that of the

[1] 'Ceylon,' vol. ii. pp. 617, 632.

very last King of Kandy, who in 1739 caused it to be inscribed on a rock that he had dedicated certain lands in the Wanni to the sacred tree.

One of the passages quoted from the Mahawanso, written about 470 A.D., concludes: "Thus this monarch of the forest, *endowed with miraculous powers,* has stood for ages in the delightful Maha-mego gardens in Lanka, *promoting the spiritual welfare of its inhabitants, and the propagation of true religion.*"

It is somewhat remarkable that in one of these quotations, Fa Hian, the Chinese traveller, describes the tree as having sent forth a branch which descended to earth and there took root. Now as this is the habit of the banyan (*Ficus indica*), and not of the Peepul or Bo (*Ficus religiosa*), certain heretics have suggested that the priests may occasionally have renovated the old tree by placing a healthy seedling in some crevice, and that by mistake a seedling of the wrong sort had at that time been introduced.

However, the leaves of these two cousins are so essentially different that such a mistake could not really have been made, those of the banyan being thick and leathery, while those of the Bo are very thin and light. They are like very large birch-leaves, heart-shaped, with a long ribbon-like point, and are attached to the stem by such a long slender stalk that they tremble incessantly, like the leaves of the aspen. This, say the Buddhists, is because of their sympathetic joy that beneath their shade Gautama attained to the perfection of all knowledge—a legend which to Christian ears recalls the tradition which attributes the quivering of the aspen leaf to the memory of that dread day when the bitter Cross on Calvary was fashioned from its unwilling wood.

The story of the tree is that it was a branch of the sacred Peepul at Uruwelle (now known as Gaya or Buddha-Gaya, the capital of Behar) beneath which Buddha sat absorbed in contemplation—some say he lived beneath its shade for four years. Those who seek most closely to assimilate the "Light of Asia" with the True Light of the World, say, forty days.[1] The mighty Indian King Dharm-Asoka—*i.e.*, the righteous Asoka—having zealously embraced Buddhism, his children followed in his footsteps, his son Mahindo becoming a priest, and his daughter Sanghamitta the abbess of a Buddhist nunnery. Mahindo, the royal missionary, came to Ceylon B.C. 307, and preached so effectually that not only Dewenipiatissa, the King of Anuradhapura, but also Queen Anula, and many women of the Isle, declared themselves converts to the new creed, and desired to take the vows of devotion thereto.

Mahindo recommended that his sister Sanghamitta should come to instruct the women; so King Tissa sent an embassy to Behar inviting the royal Abbess to come to Ceylon, and praying Asoka to bestow upon him a branch or graft of the Tree of Wisdom. This the king was

[1] The original tree at Buddha-Gaya has long since disappeared, but as with kings, so with sacred trees, "*Le roi est mort, vive le roi!*" A descendant has ever flourished to receive homage from the 100,000 pilgrims who annually flock to Gaya, no longer to reverence the memory of Buddha, but of Vishnu, to whom the tree is now dedicated. The modern tree was a very grand one, estimated at about two hundred years of age, but about ten years ago it was blown down, and only a sapling remained, which, however, has now developed into a fine tree. Close to it were the ruins of the ancient dagoba, erected on the spot where Buddha is supposed to have sat. It had been so entirely demolished by Hindoo successors that little more than the foundations remained. With more consideration for Buddhist traditions than for England's credit as a Christian nation, this stately pyramidal dagoba was actually rebuilt at great expense by the British Government, at the time when Sir Ashley Eden was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

willing to do, but dared not risk the sin of sacrilege by cutting the tree with any instrument. He therefore approached it reverently at the head of a thousand priests; they worshipped the tree, and presented offerings of flowers to it; then having prepared a golden vase filled with perfumed earth, he took vermilion paint in a golden pencil, and therewith drew a line round a branch, and prayed it to sever itself from the tree, and transplant itself into the vase, which it most obligingly did forthwith, while the assembled multitudes shouted Saadhu! to the holy tree.

Then Sanghamitta, with five hundred Buddhist nuns, started for Ceylon, in charge of the precious branch, where it was received with indescribable devotion. A whole chapter of the Mahawanso is devoted to the account of its reception, and how the king, the lord of chariots, commanded that it should be lifted by the four high-caste tribes, and by eight persons of each of the other castes, and so it was duly planted, and much worshipped.

The fact of the Peepul being held in veneration by Hindoos of all sects, as being alike sacred to Brahma and Vishnu, accounts for its having been not only spared, but honoured by the conquerors, who in different centuries overran the Isle with fire and sword.[1]

In the history of successive kings, their devotion to the Bo-tree is duly recorded—how one built up the tiers of stone terraces around it; another paved the enclosure with marble; another erected stone stairs leading up to it from four sides; others made many images of Buddha in stone and

[1] Various trees hold a place in the legends of the twenty-five Buddhas whose presence has already blessed this world. Gautama selected the Bo, as did also one of his predecessors; another was connected with the Champac; and the next will, it is said, confer similar honour on the ironwood tree with the scarlet tips of young foliage.

in metal, and built halls to receive these and various relics. King Waahsabo, who reigned A.D. 62, kept up an illumination of a thousand lamps here and at other shrines, and also "caused statues to be formed of the four Buddhas, of their exact stature, and he built an edifice to contain them, near the delightful Bo-tree." If the exact size of the other Buddhas was at all on the scale of Gautama's tooth and footprint, it must have been rather a large edifice!

After the destruction of Sitawacca by the Portuguese, it was prophesied that the town would be rebuilt when the Bo-tree lost one of its branches.

In A.D. 1674 a branch of the tree was stricken by lightning, and the Dutch verified the prophecy by restoring some of the old buildings.

It would be interesting to know whether the present phœnix-like birth of a modern Anuradhapura has any connection with the disaster which befell the tree on October 4, 1887. After a prolonged drought, which continued for eight months, the tomtom was beaten to invite all good Buddhists to assemble on the 7th to take part in the ceremony of Kiri Utura-wanawa—*i.e.*, the outpouring of milk, at the shrine of the sacred tree, while invoking rain. But on that very day (without waiting for the milk-offering!) there arose a mighty tempest of thunder, lightning, and rain, accompanied by a violent north wind which snapped the main stem: it fell with a crash, carrying with it part of the iron railing round the enclosure. Now a stump about four feet high is all that remains of the original tree.

A smaller branch had been broken in 1870, and was cremated with all honour, and said to have attained its Nirvana. But the fall of the "Great Lord" itself was a more serious matter, and was deemed a very evil omen. Sadly

and solemnly the fallen branch was sawn into logs by men attired in mourning and having handkerchiefs tied over their mouths. One log was preserved by the high priest, to be sold to pilgrims in small chips, as precious worshipful relics; the others were laid on a bullock-cart canopied with white cloth, and borne in procession to a funeral pyre erected near the Thuparama dagoba, where they were cremated with all the ceremonial observed at the funeral of a Buddhist high priest, and to a terrific accompaniment of tomtom-beating.

On the following day the ashes were collected, and a second great procession conveyed them to the neighbouring lake, the Tissa-wewa, on whose waters they were to be scattered. Apparently, however, some ashes were reserved, and a small dagoba was erected to their honour, so doubtless these now receive their full share of worship.

Except to the eye of faith, the disappearance of this preternaturally old branch will make small difference, as there are so many branches, all apparently about the same age, and none exceeding two feet in diameter, growing up through the pyramidal stonework which is built round the tree in four terraces. It is impossible to guess how much trunk there may be, as it is so effectually built up out of sight. Each of these terraces forms a platform round which the pilgrims walk in procession, and feed the great company of monkeys of all sizes and ages which play in the branches.

At one festival—the Wandanawa—these branches are plastered over with gold paper, and the boughs are decorated with hundreds of brightly coloured handkerchiefs fluttering gaily in the breeze—a pretty elaboration of the decoration of sacred bushes with rag-offerings, as practised in so many lands, from Ireland and Scotland to the Himalayas.

At night pilgrims come bearing tiny lamps, and burn camphor to the tree as they circle round within the railing. To the priests they offer more practical gifts of rice and coin. Much good milk is also poured out in offerings to the thirsty tree.

You can well understand that the withered leaves which fall from so sacred a tree are priceless treasures, and jealously guarded. The priests spread white cloths of honour beneath the tree to collect all such, and distribute or sell them to eager pilgrims. If the supply exceeds the demand, the superfluous leaves are cremated. Of course, to gather one would be accounted unpardonable sacrilege.

At night the tree is illuminated by very primitive lamps, half cocoa-nut shells filled with oil and with floating wicks, which give a feeble flickering light. I wondered that the monkeys did not upset them, but probably they have learnt by experience to respect flame.

In the outer court, overshadowed by Bo-trees of a younger and more vigorous generation, and by cocoa and palmyra palms, are various images and finely sculptured stones, including sundry five- and seven-headed cobras. So here we stand in the very presence of the ancient tree and serpent worship—the former as real as ever, the latter obsolete except in quiet corners.[1]

Yet even here you may sometimes see ashes of burnt camphor, and bits of wax and a few flowers, on these snake sculptures, proving that they have received their share of night worship, and images of cobras made of painted clay are offered on the altar of the Bo-tree which stands on the outer side of the inner wall. So Buddhism incorporates and sanctions every conceivable variety of worship, provided that

[1] See Chapter v., p. 127.

of Buddha himself is paramount. Thus the serpent-worship, which could not be eradicated, was made subservient to Buddhism, by the legend of how the gigantic king of all the cobras proved his reverence for Gautama, by rearing its great hood above his head, to protect him from the sun as he sat lost in meditation. Hence the hydra-headed serpent which forms the canopy of such innumerable images of Buddha.

BUDDHA GUARDED BY THE COBRA, ROCK TEMPLE, ELLA PASS.

The Rev. Samuel Langdon mentions that he has known various instances in which the priests or their attendants have kept tame cobras within the enclosure which generally surrounds each sacred Bo-tree, notably at the gigantic tree which overshadows the place where the kings of Kandy were cremated. These gentle pets are fed at regular hours, and it is suspected that the protection afforded them is not unmingled with some feeling of reverence.

In the same way in India, the Brahman priests find it convenient to sanction proceedings which they cannot prevent, and are present at many ceremonies of the simplest serpent-worship.[1]

Both Tamils and Singhalese have a legend of how a cobra and the even more deadly tic polonga came together to a well in a time of great drought, and finding a little girl drawing water, each asked for a drink. This she agreed to draw, provided they would promise never to bite her. Both

[1] Some of which I have described in 'In the Himalayas,' pp. 249, 250. Published by Chatto & Windus.

promised and both drank, and the cobra glided gratefully away, but the treacherous tic bit the child, who died in great agony. So the cobra is called *Nallu pambu*, "the good snake," because he kept his promise, and he and the tic hate one another so cordially that the Singhalese equivalent for the old English saying about hating a thing "as the devil hates holy water" is, "They hate one another as the tic hates the polonga."

It has been suggested that the various proverbs and folk-lore referring to this enmity really owe their origin to ancient feuds between clans of the Nágas or serpent-worshipping tribes who inhabited Ceylon ere its conquest by the Singhalese.

Pollonarua, the mighty medieval city which became the capital of the Isle after the downfall of Anuradhapura, is said to have been named in honour of the two serpents aforesaid—*Polon* and *ná*, the polonga and naga—in order to propitiate both.

Some years ago Mr Layard opened a dagoba near Colombo which was supposed to have been built to commemorate the conversion of the Nága king of Kelany to the faith of Buddha. The treasure-chamber contained some fragments of bone wrapped in thin gold-leaf, a few pearls, gold rings and bits of brass, a brass lamp, a small pyramid made of cement, and A CLAY COBRA wrapped up in cotton cloth.

I lingered long, alone with my sketching-block, amid these strangely suggestive surroundings, the stillness broken only by the ceaseless rustling of the trembling leaves, or an occasional stampede of inquisitive monkeys.

The entrance to this sacred enclosure is by a double-roofed red-tiled gateway (what a multitude of reverent pilgrims from far and near have passed through that old portal in the

course of these two thousand years !). Just beyond are forty rows of roughly-hewn stone pillars, which even now stand twelve feet above the soil, and are doubtless sunk to a depth of many more—a strange and unique sight. In each row there are forty of these granite monoliths, making sixteen hundred in all. Some have fallen, some are half buried among the ruins, but there they are—and these are all that now remain above ground to mark the spot where the stately Brazen Palace once stood, with all its crowds of learned priests. Of course there is not a vestige of the copper which once covered the pillars, nor of the resplendent brazen tiles.

I was told a legend—whether authentic or not I cannot say—that the final destruction of this grand building was due to fire kindled by a queen, who when sore beset by the Malabar armies, and seeing no hope of escape from beleaguering foes, resolved that at least they should not enjoy the pillage of the palace, and so caused all her most precious possessions to be brought here and heaped together, and having with her own hands set fire to this costly funeral pyre, thereon sought death.

Now the desolate ruins are forsaken alike by priests and worshippers. I wandered alone through the labyrinth of grey pillars where only a flock of shaggy, long-legged, reddish goats were nibbling the parched grass, just as I have seen British sheep finding greener pasture beneath the shadow of the mighty rock-temple of our own ancestors at Stonehenge.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANURADHAPURA AND MIHINTALE.

Isurumuniya—Yoga-stones—Proverbs—Water-lilies—Beautiful jungle shrubs—The Kuttam Pokuna—The oldest tanks—Rainfall—The modern town—Mihintale—Mahindo—The great mountain-stair—Dagobas—Naga Pokuna—Mahindo's bed—Rock cells—Inscriptions.

AMID such a labyrinth of ruins, all on such level ground, the network of jungle paths would be bewildering were it not for two broad grassy roads which have been cleared, forming an inner and outer circle, so as greatly to facilitate finding all the chief objects of interest.

One of these is Isurumuniya, an ancient temple which, three hundred years before the birth of Christ, was hewn out of a mass of solid rock, by order of King Dewenipiatissa, the "Delight of the Gods." There are temple buildings and sculptures all about and around the rock, and a number of very remarkable grotesque frescoes—so grotesque and so unlike orthodox Buddhist art that they are attributed to Hindoo sculptors (that is to say, Hindoo in religion: as regards nationality, we know that Wijayo and his Singhalese followers also came to Ceylon from the valley of the Ganges).

The name of this temple, however, seems to mark this spot

as one revered by the islanders ere either Buddhism or Brahmanism was here established—at least it seems probable that it was derived from "Eiswara" and "Muniya," *i.e.*, ascetic.

The worship of Eiswara,[1] the Almighty, as still observed on the Saami Rock at Trincomalee, seems to have been the original worship of Ceylon, and probably this rock also was specially sacred from the earliest days. But the Hindoo worshippers of Siva artfully identified Eiswara with Siva, and it is probable that, in some of their many invasions, a community of Sivites may have settled in the neighbourhood of King Tissa's temple, which otherwise presents all the usual features of Buddhist art—the fine semicircular moonstone at the base of sculptured stairs, at each flight of which stand the invariable janitors, canopied by a seven-headed cobra.

Within the Rock Temple sits a small image of Buddha, hewn from the solid rock, and flanked by two very ancient wooden figures, apparently preaching. Four boldly designed elephants' heads stand out from the rock in low relief, and there are other details of interest.

Near the temple is a *pansala* or dwelling-house for the priests; but the chief-priest has a *galgé* or cell to himself—a most uninviting little room, cut out of the solid rock. These occupy themselves in doing homage to a Sri-patula, or sacred footprint, recently cut on the summit of the rock to represent the footmark on the summit of Adam's Peak—as also in offering flowers on the altar of a young bo-tree, which has been carefully planted in a crevice of the rock. Some very incongruous foreign-looking modern building has in recent times been erected on the rock, and looks thoroughly out of place in the strange jungle temple.

Amongst the minor objects of interest pointed out to us

[1] See Chapter xix.

were certain "Yoga"-stones, most puzzling to the uninitiated, as they are simply square stones, each having a certain number of square holes cut into them: these holes vary from nine to twenty-five in number. One might suppose they were designed for playing some game; but those who are learned in Buddhist mysteries tell us that they were an aid to intensify meditation, used by such of the priests as desired to attain the highest grade of sanctity. The method adopted was for the devotee to fill these holes with sweet-oil, sandal-wood, and other ingredients, and then sit hour after hour gazing intently on the stone, till at last the weary dazed eyes began to see a dazzle of light, which gradually increased till the watcher beheld through that medium all the hells and purgatories of the under-world. Then, raising his eyes, he beheld through the same dazzle all the graduated heavens of the demi-gods, and the glory of Buddha in the highest heaven.

I remembered how at Benares I had watched the Brahmin priests practising *habsidum* or "the retention of breath," as a similar method of attaining sanctity! Verily, "men have sought out many inventions"!

We were also shown some interesting old stone coffins, made of solid blocks of stone, hollowed out so as just to fit the figure of the dead. The cover, which is more or less sculptured, is a heavy slab of stone cemented to the main block. One of these was said to have been the coffin of King Dutugemunu (of whose death, about B.C. 150, I have already spoken): if so, it speaks little of reverence for the mighty dead that his tomb should have been thus rifled. But most of these have been taken from graves of

> "Chiefs who under their grey stone
> So long have slept, that fickle Fame
> Hath blotted from her rolls their name."

With regard to the king's sarcophagus, however, there is a tradition that this was not his coffin, but his medicine-bath, in which he lay to counteract the poison of a serpent's bite. It is to be hoped the bath was ready beforehand!

Recent excavations have brought to light many things intensely interesting to archæologists, such as a very remarkable stone railing, peculiar to Buddhist architecture, various images of Buddha, and portions of ancient buildings. But until quite recently the Goths and Vandals made such free use of any building-stone that seemed suitable for any modern work—bridge-building or repairs—and so many stones, inconvenient to farmers, disappeared, when portions of the jungle were *chenaëd* (*i.e.*, cleared for temporary cultivation), that the work of excavation and restoration is very much less satisfactory now than it would have been twenty years ago.

Of course nowadays every stone is rigidly protected; but in too many cases this is too late to avert the mischief. By the way, the Singhalese version of "locking the door when the steed is stolen" is "fencing the field while the oxen are within, devouring the corn."

Many of the time-honoured proverbs of Europe have their equivalent among the common sayings of the Singhalese. Thus, for "*Parmi les aveugles les borgnes sont rois*," we find "In the tank where there is no loolā, kanapaddi is the pundit" (the latter being an insignificant fish as compared with the loolā).

For "Let sleeping dogs lie" we have "Why awaken sleeping cheetas?" *i.e.*, leopards. For "*Chat échaudé craint l'eau froide*," the Eastern equivalent shows that the man who was beaten with a firebrand shrinks from the glimmer of the firefly.

In place of forbearing to "add fuel to the fire," these

travellers through thorny jungles bid us "not sharpen thorns."

That "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" is suggested by the wisdom which prefers "a snipe to-day to an elephant on the morrow," and esteems crow's flesh which is near above peacock's flesh which is far off.

To "run with the hare and hunt with the hounds" is described by "drinking of the river but praising the sea."

Divers social grades are justified by asking "whether all five fingers are of one size?" while of a man overwhelmed with trouble, it is said, that when the waters have risen above his head it matters little whether their height be a span or a cubit.

Notwithstanding all the new attractions opened up by the extensive clearing of the forest, I almost doubt whether the ancient city can be quite so charming or so romantic, now that she has become a centre of so much interest, as in the lonely days of her utter desolation. But certainly there is no doubt as to the advantages for the inhabitants, who, from a mere handful of poor, sickly, half-starved villagers, now number about three thousand healthy well-fed people, chiefly owing to the clearing of great tracts of jungle and the restoration of the tanks—the one dispelling malaria, and the other securing a fair supply of good water, which, it is hoped, may ere long be made quite permanent.

At the time of our visit there was sufficient drought to enable us to realise what the lack of water *might* be. The beautiful river—the Malwatte-oya ("river of the Garden of Flowers")—which in time of monsoon rains flows in a rushing flood, was almost dried up, the small artificial lakes had scarcely sufficient water to float the lovely water-lilies, and the minor tanks were altogether dried up.

Oh, the beauty of those water-lilies!—white, blue, yellow, or pink—nestling among their glossy leaves on the still waters. The fragrant, large, pink *manel* (the true lotus)[1] is, I think, the handsomest of all water-plants. Of course it is not so splendid as the *Victoria regia* of South America (on the great leaves of which, six feet in diameter, and with upturned rims four or five inches high, Indian mothers deposit their babies while they do the household washing), nor is it so dainty as some of the smaller lilies, with flat glossy leaves; but it certainly is a beautiful object, as, with the first ray of the morning, it rises high above the surface of the water, and unfolds its rosy petals to drink in sunlight all the day, closing them again at sunset, when the blossoms hide beneath the great blue-grey leaves, and, I am told, sink beneath the surface of the water.

When the flower fades the petals fall, leaving a seed-pod the shape of a funnel, and internally divided like a honeycomb, each cell containing one seed about the size of a filbert, and with much the same flavour, only rather more oily, like an almond. The roots are also very good food; but, fortunately, the blossom is so much prized for offering in the temple (the lotus being especially sacred to Buddha), that it escapes being pulled up wholesale.

Notwithstanding the drought, all through the jungle every now and again there arose a general fragrance like the scent of a hothouse, wafted from blossoms often hidden from sight. But there were a tree and a shrub whose wealth of flower and intensity of colour formed a very marked and attractive feature in the forest. The former, called *Cassia fistula*, is like a magnificent laburnum, but grows to the size of an English ash-tree, and its bunches of large golden blossom

[1] *Nelumbium speciosum.*

are each about two feet in length. Its foliage is also something like that of the ash. The French name for laburnum—"golden rain"—would in this case describe a truly tropical shower!

And instead of bearing neat little seeds like our familiar friend, these gorgeous blossoms develop into very peculiar jet-black pods, perfectly cylindrical, and from two to three feet long, divided into a number of compartments, each containing one seed. It has been suggested that the tree at this stage seems as though it had borne an abundant crop of ebony rulers, each suspended to the bough by a short string! There is another species of cassia which bears a shorter thicker pod, only about a foot in length. Each seed of both species is embedded in a sweet, sticky, black pulp, which has valuable medicinal properties. Unfortunately, its bark is also very highly valued for other medical purposes, consequently it is difficult to preserve this beautiful tree near cities, because the natives almost invariably contrive to find some opportunity to peel the poor thing, and leave it to perish.

The other shrub which so fascinated me was one which I have never seen elsewhere; but as its blossoms only last three or four days, I may have passed it often at other times without observing it. During that short period it is covered with such a luxuriant wealth of small flowers of the very purest cobalt blue, that it seems as though a bit of the blue heaven overhead had fallen on this favoured bush. I am told that this lovely plant rejoices in the name of *Memecylon tinctorium*, and that its glossy green leaves, strange to say, yield a delicate yellow dye; also that it bears dark-blue berries something like our blaeberry, which the natives eat, and which possess astringent qualities.

Another very pretty common jungle shrub is the ipecacuanha, which bears clusters of bright orange-coloured flowers.

And besides the flowers there were the butterflies—such beauties, and so many of them, of such infinite variety!—floating in the hot quivering air. And hot it certainly was beneath the noonday sun, when the atmosphere seemed to our tired eyes to be visibly vibrating and dazzling. Still, by taking rational precautions—such as carrying a large white umbrella, and wearing a damp sponge suspended inside my solar hat, so as to keep a cool damp atmosphere above my head, and a fairly thick jacket to protect the spine—I never found any evil from sitting out sketching the livelong day; and I am inclined to think that women in general live far too much in the dark in tropical countries.[1]

I referred just now to the medicinal use of cassia-bark. The native Singhalese doctors are fully aware of the value of many plants and shrubs, such as the sarsaparilla, nux-vomica, and gamboge tree. The latter yields its golden juice on the bark being stabbed, and its intensely acid fruit is dried and used in curries. The bark of the cashew-tree yields tannin. Charcoal obtained from the burnt root of the jak-tree is a remedy for malignant sores and ulcers.

In 1886 Dr Trimen, the director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, had collected samples of 362 of the vegetable drugs

[1] May I be forgiven for referring to one small medical detail, attention to which has, I know, proved my own safeguard in many years of travel. The commonest of all forms of illness in tropical countries is diarrhœa; and the general impulse seems to be at once to check it by the use of brandy or chlorodyne, whereas common-sense might surely suggest that when Nature thus endeavours to throw off some irritant she ought rather to be helped in so doing. I therefore strongly recommend a small bottle of castor-oil in a wooden case as part of every traveller's indispensable outfit and safeguard—quite as essential as quinine.

in use among the native village doctors in the Central Province, and considered his series to be by no means complete. They seem to include remedies for every ill that flesh can possibly endure; but though really good in themselves, most are villanously prepared, and so many are given in combination to make up huge doses that they often neutralise one another. Besides, as each phase of the moon is supposed to preside over a different set of organs, remedies are not administered on the day when the patient requires them, but according to astronomical laws. Thus, however necessary may be a purgative medicine, it must on no account be administered on the day when the moon influences the bowels, nor may an emetic be given on the day when the stomach is under lunar control!

In looking over this list, I see sixteen different plants which are accounted remedies in cases of snake-bite: for instance, the resin of the Kekuna[1] is used with other drugs in preparing a vapour-bath in cases of cobra-bite. It is also used as a fumigation to drive away serpents from houses. In cases of bite by the polonga, the poison is expelled by stroking the wound hundreds of times with a bundle of the leaves of the Madatiya.[2] These leaves and the bark also reduce sprains. The flour obtained from the seeds of the Madu[3] is useful in rheumatic affections and polonga bites. The resin of the Bú-hora[4] is applied in cobra-bites, and the oil which oozes from the bark is applied to cattle afflicted with murrain. The leaves of the Kurinnan[5] are used in cases of dysentery and snake-bite, and are eaten as a vegetable by nursing mothers to increase their supply of milk.

[1] *Canarium Zeylanicum.* [2] *Adenanthera pavonina.* [3] *Cycas circinalis.* [4] *Dipterocarpus hispidus.* [5] *Gymnema lactiferum.*

The tuberous roots of the gorgeous Niyangala lily—the *Gloriosa superba*—are used in snake-bite, and also in difficult cases of child-birth. The Nidi-kumba[1] is distinguished as a REAL CURE for cobra-bite; and it is added that should anything fall into the eye, the sufferer must chew the whole plant, when the foreign body will be driven out. The roots of the Attana (*Datura fastuosa*) are used as a remedy against the bite of mad dogs, and also as a cure for insanity. The whole plant dried and smoked as tobacco is a useful remedy in cases of asthma.

However, I need not pursue this subject further. Suffice it to say that those native prescriptions, many of which are of great antiquity, and have been handed down from generation to generation, provide for every conceivable ailment—from a wasp's sting, a hiccough, or a headache to all stages of indigestion, fever, cutaneous diseases, and internal complications.

But while speaking of divers remedies, I may mention that though the Singhalese pharmacopœia is apparently free from such horrible decoctions of animals as figured so largely in the *materia medica* of our own ancestors,[2] some curious recipes for the preparation of charms are quite in the style of our best witch's cauldrons. Here, for instance, is one for the preparation of a deadly poison known as the cobra-tel, which was obtained by Mr Morris in 1840, on the occasion of a trial for murder by means of this poison.

First of all, a cock must be sacrificed to the yakkos or demons. Then live venomous snakes—the hooded cobra, the

[1] *Mimosa pudica.*

[2] I have quoted many examples of extraordinary "Anglo-Saxon Leechdoms" in a paper on "Strange Medicines" in 'The Nineteenth Century' for June 1887.

cara wella, and the tic polonga—must be taken, and a sharp cut made on the head of each. They are then suspended alive over a chattie, that their poison may drip into it. To this is added arsenic and other drugs, together with the froth from the lips of three wretched kabragoyas (gigantic lizards), which are tied up on three sides of the fire, with their heads towards it, and are tormented with whips to make them hiss that the fire may blaze. All these horrid ingredients are then mixed and boiled in a human skull, and so soon as the oily scum rises to the surface the cobra-tel is ready.

The fat of the kabragoya applied externally is good for various skin diseases, but taken internally is accounted poisonous. (It is said, however, that the Veddahs eat a kabragoya with as much relish as we would eat a hare.)

A horrid magic love-potion is said to be prepared by Singhalese sorcerers from the large beautiful eyes of the little loris—nice little furry beasts which creep slowly about on trees, and roll themselves up like a ball, to sleep. It is said that the barbarous mode of preparing the love-charm is by holding the poor little creature close to the fire till its eyeballs burst.

Special virtue is believed to attach to a *Narri-comboo* or jackal's horn—a small horny cone, about half an inch long, which occasionally grows on the head of a jackal, and is hidden by a tuft of hair. Both Singhalese and Tamils believe that this horny knob is a talisman, and that the happy man who owns one is certain to have every wish fulfilled, and his jewels and other treasures are safe from robbers.

As regards medicines obtained from animal substances, the musk-gland of the civet cat is greatly prized in certain

maladies; peacock's flesh is considered desirable food for persons suffering from contraction of the joints; and bezoar stones, which are smooth dark-green concretions, occasionally found inside of monkeys and other animals, are greatly esteemed in Ceylon, as well as in India, as an antidote to poison.

I may add that with the Ceylon Medical College annually turning out its complement of medical students, highly trained in all the learning of European schools, such details as these are happily fast receding to their right place as antiquarian curiosities, soon, we may hope, to be as wholly memories of the past as are the grey ruins of this ancient city.

Among the various remarkable objects to which I have not alluded, I must mention a group of tall grey monoliths standing upright, each 16 feet above ground, and 2 feet square, the mere placing of which must have been a wondrous difficulty. They must have supported some palace; but now large trees, matted with jungle-vines like enormous ropes, have grown up amongst them.

Still more worthy of note are the Kuttam Pokuna, or twin bathing-places—two beautifully constructed tanks, lined with great stones laid in terraces, and flights of steps, with handsome balustrade descending from every side to where water once was. The twins are only separated by a narrow grassy path. The largest is 132 feet long by 51 feet wide, and the depth is about 30 feet. I thought this strange ruin of ancient luxury, now encompassed by the great lonely forest, was as remarkable a scene as any in the jungle city. One of these tanks has now been restored as a bathing-place, and the other is left as an interesting archæological study.

Not very far from here sits a great dark stone image of Buddha, quite by itself in the heart of the forest.

Smaller pokunas are found in connection with almost all the old buildings.

Of course the semi-marshy artificial lakes were very attractive spots, none the less so for the numerous dark objects which, on nearer inspection, invariably turned out to be crocodiles! These are from 12 to 18 feet in length, and by no means pleasant bathing companions! I think Anuradhapura owns eight large tanks, and a good many small ones: about three of the former may be dignified with the name of lake.

The oldest of all is that now known as the Basawakulam, but originally as the Abaya-wewa, constructed B.C. 505 by King Panduwaasa. (I may mention that *kulam* and *wewa* both mean tank.) The second and third were the Jaya-wewa and the Gamini tank, both constructed about B.C. 437 by Panduka-abaya. Then, about B.C. 300, King Dewenipiatissa made the Tissa-wewa, which is more than three miles in circumference. (This was restored in 1878.)

Within a short distance of the town lies the Nuwara-wewa, "the city tank," which is supposed to be the aforesaid Jaya-wewa, a very pretty tank-lake, covered with water-lilies, and with sedgy shores haunted by many wild-fowl. It lies embosomed in forest, beyond which rise Mihintale and other blue hills. We rode to see its interesting old sluice, two thousand years old, but were nearly sickened by the horrid smell of bats.

Now, thanks to the energy of the recent governors, all these tanks have been restored, and are in good working order. The Giant's Canal, the Yoda Ela, brings the blessed

water from the great reservoir at Kala-wewa to supply Tissa-wewa, whence it is distributed to the other tanks, great and small. Three of the latter are severally reserved, one for cooking and drinking, a second for bathing, the third for washing clothes, and for horses and cattle. Every Sunday evening all these are emptied, the water finding its way back to the river. Then the tanks are refilled with fresh water from Tissa-wewa. To avoid the possibility of pollution, no one is allowed to take water from the lake itself.

As regards the direct gifts of the clouds, the rainfall of Anuradhapura averages 54; 50 inches falling in the course of a hundred days annually. Its longest period of drought in recent days was from May to September 1884, when the land endured 121 "fine sunny days." (Manaar in the far north gets on an average 15 inches less rain, and so recently as 1887 it numbered 159 consecutive days of blazing scorching sun! Well may its inhabitants pray for the speedy restoration and multiplication of their irrigation works.)

Responsive to the gift of water, the grateful land now yields her increase in abundant crops of luxuriant rice; the Government Hospital reports fewer and fewer patients from malarial fevers, parangi, and other diseases due to dirt and hunger, bad air, bad water, and bad food; and in a corner of the long desolate city there has arisen a pleasant modern town, with post-office, telegraph, court-house, rest-house, Church Mission school, and neat, well-ordered bazaars.

I recently heard a little incident of that school, very suggestive of the work it is doing, as one has said, in confronting the dreary negations of Buddha with the glorious affirmations of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was on the occasion of the first baptism in the school. When it became

known that two or three boys had resolved to accept Christ as their Master, some of the leading boys called on all to declare themselves. "Let Buddha's boys come to Buddha's side, and let Christ's boys go to Christ's side," they said. All except two went to Buddha's side. Then said the others, "What! only you two?" And then one began to waver, and his courage failed him.

When the time came for the candidates for baptism to present themselves, both lads came forward, and the other objected. "You denied the Lord," he said. Humbly and contritely the penitent answered, "I was tempted, and I was overcome. I repent, and I believe." So both were baptised in presence of many witnesses, and these were the first-fruits of the Christian school in Anuradhapura.

When, on July 4, 1891, Sir Arthur Havelock, the present Governor, paid his first visit to this historic city, he was received by the children of this school singing "God save the Queen," and by a great gathering of the people. All the tanks were full, everything around was fresh and green. At every turn there were graceful arches of welcome, decorated with the choicest spoils of the forest; the broad grassy roads were in perfect order; and at night these and the principal buildings and one of the great dagobas were all illuminated, a grand display of fireworks completing the attractions of the scene. Of course native music and dancing were inevitable, but there was the consolation of knowing that if the guests did not fully enjoy these details, the entertainers did so themselves!

Leaving Anuradhapura, we rode eight miles eastward to Mihintale, a rocky mountain which from time immemorial has been held in the highest veneration. It is about a thousand feet high, densely clothed with forest, and crowned

THE LOWER FLIGHT OF THE THOUSAND STEPS AT MIHINTALE

Total, 1840.

with huge granite rocks. It is alluded to in pre-historic legends as the Cliff of Ambatthalo, and was the sanctuary where, long ere the dawn of the present era of Buddhism, the Buddhas of earlier ages appeared for the enlightenment of races whose name and history are alike forgotten.

Consequently, when in B.C. 307 Mahindo, "the royal missionary," King Asoca's son, was impelled to leave his father's court at Patali-puri (now Patna), to make known the doctrines of Buddha, he was miraculously transported through the air and deposited on the summit of this mountain which now bears his name. It so happened that King Dewenipiatissa was hunting the great sambur deer, when a *devo*, or good spirit, assuming the form of a deer, enticed him onward almost to the summit of the mountain, when Mahindo appeared to him and spoke so persuasively, that the king was converted then and there, and forty thousand of his people immediately followed suit.

Naturally the mountain where such a miracle had occurred became the centre around which gathered all manner of saintly men and supernatural legends. The ascent from the base to the summit, once so toilsome, was made easy by the piety of royal pilgrims; and now a rudely laid stair of 1840 great slabs of dark gneiss rock enables one to mount without the slightest difficulty: indeed it is possible to ride to the summit, which doubtless accounts for many of the steps being broken and somewhat displaced. Each of these great stones averages 18 feet in length, some are over 20 feet. Near the summit the steps are hewn in the solid rock. Ancient records attribute this good work to King Maha Dailiya, whose reign ended A.D. 20. But inasmuch as this mountain has been held sacred from time immemorial, it is supposed that in the dim twilight of remote antiquity many

successive generations contributed their share to facilitating the ascent, so probably it is partly of incalculable age.

That grand stairway is of itself a most striking picture, with pilgrims and yellow-robed priests ascending and descending, and the dark forest overshadowing it on either side, while great weird tree cacti stretch out far-reaching arms, like uncanny spirits. Some of these have stems from three to four feet in circumference.

In the days of old, the whole distance from Anuradhapura to Mihintale was one continuous street, along which passed solemn processions, pausing to worship at countless shrines and temples; for traditions cluster thick along the way, and on the mountain itself every crag is sacred: and so they toiled up the long stairs, as we also did, but I fear less reverently, till they reached the Etwehera dagoba on the top of the highest peak, and there adored one single hair plucked from a mole which grew between Buddha's eyebrows, and which, in the year 1 A.D., was enshrined in this mass of solid brickwork, about 100 feet high, by the devout Rajah Battiyatissa.

He was so pleased with his work, that when it was completed he is said to have enveloped it in a jewelled covering ornamented with pearls, and to have spread a carpet all the way from the sacred rock to Anuradhapura, that pilgrims might walk thence with unsoiled feet!

Happily there was no difficulty in obtaining water near the summit wherewith to wash soiled feet, for the Naga Pokuna, or snake bathing-place, lies near the path. It is a pool about 130 feet in length hewn out of the rock, and guarded by a mighty five-headed cobra, sculptured in high relief from the background of dark rock. It is only about seven feet high and six feet across the hood, but some-

FIVE-HEADED NAGA AT THE BATHING-PLACE, MIHINTALE.

5 headed Naga.

how it looks much larger as it rises from the dark still pool, where small white lilies float so peacefully. It impressed itself on my memory as a very suggestive picture.

I found a good point for a comprehensive picture from the Maha - Seya dagoba, overlooking two great dagobas built on huge rounded shoulders of rock, and surrounded by tall fruit-bearing cocoa-palms, whose presence at this height, and so far inland, is very unusual; and far beyond all extended the vast panorama of the great plain. From another point I overlooked the site of the distant city itself, with its glittering lakes, and the great monuments towering above the level expanse of forest. But here the chief interest centred round one of those near dagobas—namely, the Ambustele — which is of graceful form, and differs from most others in that it is built of stone instead of the usual brick. It is surmounted with the customary pinnacle — circular on a square base; and around it are grouped about fifty very slender octagonal pillars, some of which retain their finely sculptured capitals, on which the sacred goose figures alternately with grotesque human beings. Some of these had fallen, and lay half buried in creeping plants.

This dagoba is said to have been erected on the very spot where Mahindo and the king first met, and is supposed to contain the ashes of the royal Teacher, who died here B.C. 267.

It was decidedly hot on that hill-top, and never was drink more acceptable than were the cool young cocoa-nuts provided for us by the considerate priests. It is one of the ever-recurring miracles in the Tropics that all newly gathered fruit—especially cocoa-nuts, pine-apples, oranges, and mangoes—are so deliciously cool when first gathered,

even under a scorching sun; but within a very few minutes after being separated from the parent stem all their freshness vanishes, and they are subject to the laws of heat like all other things animate and inanimate.

A singularly dangerous and uncomfortable ledge on a high rock-summit was pointed out as having been the bed of the royal priest. It is canopied by another rock-mass, forming a natural arch over it; but the rocky bed is but 5 feet by 2, with a precipice on either side, suggestive rather of penitential vigil than of repose. However, for any one thoroughly awake and owning a good head, it is a fine resting-place, commanding a grand view. It is said that on a very clear day you can see the ocean on either side to east and west. On the one hand you overlook the wide-spread forest with patches of level rice-fields, and the road along which, two thousand years ago, King Tissa sent his chariot to bring Mahindo from his mountain sanctuary to the capital, and along which the Lady Abbess, Princess Sanghamitta, travelled with her company of nuns and all their retinue to deposit on Mihintale the sixteen precious relics which were to add sanctity to the holy hill. On the other side lies a deep ravine, where huge masses of grey gneiss or granite lie partly veiled by luxuriant creepers.

One high shoulder of the mountain is crossed with such enormous angular boulders, that one marvels how they can possibly have got there. They are suggestive of the *blocs perchés* left by old glaciers; but I believe there is no trace in Ceylon of any glacial action. Campbell of Islay, speaking of all this district, says: "The plains are studded with hills which are rocks; many of these are rounded as rocks are in glaciated countries. On top of some are large loose stones of the same rock, gneiss—nothing but gneiss and

angular *débris* of gneiss. Some have caves which look like sea-caves. . . . These rocks, plains, and hills might easily be mistaken for glacial work; . . . but in travelling over 600 miles in Ceylon, I could find no mark whatever of glaciation. . . . I looked for ice marks, and found none. . . . After careful study, I believe them to be the work of the Indian Ocean, aided by a tropical sun and tropical rains."

I may mention that this gneiss is capable of taking a beautiful polish, and specimens from the Mahara quarries near Colombo (which furnished material for the great breakwater) show a most harmonious blending of grey, green, and black; while a short distance to the north, near Heneretgodda, there is a fine granitic gneiss like our own red granite.

Not far from "Mahindo's bed" we came to a curious *galge*, or rock-cut chamber, where ascetics of old must have lived in much discomfort. It looks as if there had originally been a small cave, and this has been divided into cells, with portals of solid masonry, altogether out of proportion to the humble interior. A number of tall stone pillars seem to have supported a temple, and water was supplied by the Kaludiya Pokuna close by. Now a group of banyan-trees have taken possession of the rock; and their white twisted stems and roots form a strange network overspreading the whole, while a large colony of bats hold undisputed possession of the rocky cells.

Birds of bright plumage chatter in the trees, careless butterflies float in the sunshine, squirrels and lizards of various sorts dart to and fro, and give a touch of life to the deserted shrines; while sundry wild-flowers and graceful silver and maidenhair ferns adorn many a crevice in the rocks and in the crumbling ruins.

These are too numerous to name. One group, however,

impressed itself vividly on my mind—namely, the Gal Sannaso, looking up a flight of steps through the jungle to two great upright oblong stone slabs, whereon are sculptured inscriptions in the ancient Pali, granting lands to the temple. All around are the usual lot of tall monolithic pillars, which seem to have once supported a temple protecting these "stone books," and high above all towers a red crumbling dome, seen through a framework of dark foliage.

Such inscriptions are numerous, both on rocks and on old buildings. Some are in the Nagara or square character, said to have been introduced by Mahindo himself. On a huge rock slab near the Naga Pokuna there is a very lengthy inscription, supposed to have been cut about A.D. 262, in the reign of King Sri Sangabo, recording curiously minute regulations for the daily lives of the priests, and the ordering of all matters, temporal and spiritual, concerning the Buddhist monasteries and temples in this place. So many cells are assigned to each ecclesiastical rank—the readers, the expounders, the preachers—each of whom took up a separate branch: some taught metaphysics, and some Buddhist law. The hour of rising, subjects for meditation, ceremonial ablution, the correct manner of assuming the yellow robe, the morning service in the temple, the breakfast on rice and congee (rice-water), and the care of sick priests, are all minutely detailed. So also are the duties of the servants, the cooks, the workmen, the overseers of the village, and all who had services and offices allotted to them.

It is enacted that none who follow the chase, kill poultry, or otherwise destroy life, shall be permitted to dwell near the mountain. All matters relating to temple lands and offerings are minutely regulated; and it is required that all details of daily expenditure shall be entered in account books,

which shall be collected monthly, and that in like manner the year's accounts shall be duly examined and verified by the assembled priests.

Another long inscription specifies the exact allowance of rice, and of money for the purchase of flowers, to be made to every person engaged in the service of the temple, from the bana (*i.e.*, preaching) priest down to the hewers of wood and drawers of water. In this list we find mention of the persons who furnish lime, the plasterers, and the whitewashers—those who spread the cloths on the floor, and those who do likewise for the ceiling; there is the shoemaker who keeps the monastery in sandals; the chief thatcher and the eleven inferior thatchers; the five potters, who are to furnish five earthenware chatties daily, and another who supplies ten water-pots each month; a new water-strainer is also supplied every month. To some of these are allotted temple lands for cultivation.

Amongst the inmates of the monastery we find mention of the warder of the granary, the warder of the preaching-house, the receivers of the revenues, various clerks, a manager of the festivals, an upper servant, "who communicates orders to the twenty-four menials," several watchmen, twelve cooks, the man who procures fuel, the man who goes errands, and last, not least, a physician, who receives what appears to be a good allowance, besides holding a farm, whereas the surgeon receives less than a common watchman or a thatcher.

The laundry department is not forgotten—the washing of cloths, vestments, and bed linen is all ordered; but the most characteristic details are those which provide for the regular supply of incense, oil, and flowers for daily offering at each of the sacred shrines. The cultivator of lotus flowers in the village Sapoogamiya undertakes to furnish one hundred and

twenty blossoms each month, while some one else ekes out a living by daily sweeping away the withered flowers.

How little those who graved these words on the enduring rock foresaw that, after the lapse of sixteen centuries, when they themselves were altogether forgotten, pale-faced men from far-away isles would come to decipher this record of their domestic regulations!

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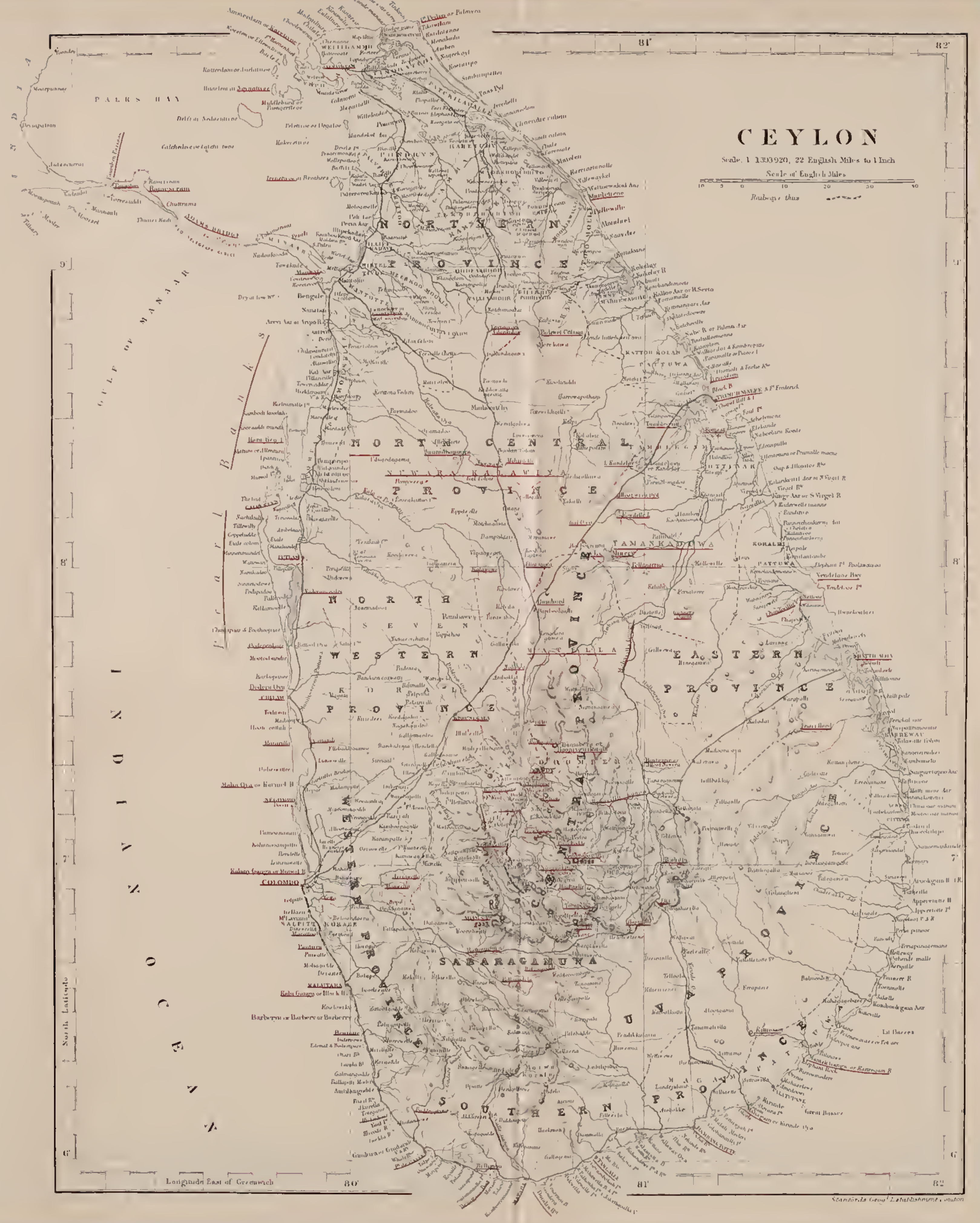
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